







# A HISTORY OF THE BRITISH NAVY DURING THE WAR

ADAPTED FROM  
COLONEL JOHN BUCHAN'S  
"HISTORY OF THE WAR"

BY  
H. C. O'NEILL



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## CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>PREFACE</i> . . . . .	v
<i>LIST OF MAPS AND CHARTS</i> . . . . .	ix
I. THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR AT SEA . . . . .	I
II. THE BATTLE OF THE BIGHT OF HELIGOLAND . . . . .	23
III. THE BATTLES OF CORONEL AND THE FALK- LAND ISLANDS . . . . .	51
IV. RAIDS AND BLOCKADES . . . . .	75
V. THE DARDANELLES : THE SEA ATTACK . . . . .	104
VI. THE LANDING AT GALLIPOLI . . . . .	147
VII. THE NAVY IN SUPPORT . . . . .	166
VIII. CONVOY AND COASTAL OPERATIONS . . . . .	185
IX. LAKE AND RIVER FIGHTING . . . . .	195
X. THE ROYAL NAVAL AIR SERVICE . . . . .	205
XI. THE BRITISH SUBMARINES . . . . .	214
XII. THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND . . . . .	222

CHAPTER	PAGE
XIII. TWO YEARS OF THE WAR . . . . .	264
XIV. THE UNRESTRICTED SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN. . . . .	297
XV. RAIDS AND RETRIBUTION . . . . .	306
XVI. THE NAVY AND THE WAR . . . . .	313

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX

I. THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS . . . . .	321
II. THE POLICY OF THE "BLACK LIST" . . . . .	327
III. THE RIGHTS OF NEUTRALS . . . . .	335
IV. THE BRITISH NAVAL ACHIEVEMENT . . . . .	350
INDEX . . . . .	355

## LIST OF MAPS AND CHARTS

	PAGE
NAVAL BASES OF THE BELLIGERENT POWERS ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	8
NAVAL BASES IN THE NORTH SEA ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	14
BATTLE OF THE BIGHT OF HELIGOLAND ( <i>Charts</i> ) :	
Position at 7 A.M. . . . .	29
Position about 8.25 A.M. . . . .	31
Position about 11 A.M. . . . .	32
Position about Noon . . . . .	35
Position at 1.40 P.M. . . . .	36
THE YSER FRONT, NIEUPORT TO DIXMUDE ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	53
BATTLE OF CORONEL ( <i>Map and Chart</i> ) . . . . .	63
BATTLE OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS ( <i>Charts</i> ) :	
First Phase—8 A.M. . . . .	67
Second Phase—11 A.M. . . . .	69
Last Phase . . . . .	71
BRITISH EAST COAST, SHOWING DISTANCES FROM GERMAN BASE ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	76
RAID ON SCARBOROUGH AND HARTLEPOOL ( <i>Map and     Chart</i> ) . . . . .	80
BATTLE OF JANUARY 24TH ( <i>Charts</i> ) :	
First Phase—9.30 A.M. . . . .	93
Second Phase—11.10 A.M. . . . .	95
Third Phase—12.30 P.M. . . . .	97
THE DARDANELLES CAMPAIGN ( <i>General Sketch Map</i> ) . . . . .	107
ATTACK ON THE OUTER FORTS, DARDANELLES ( <i>Map     and Chart</i> ) . . . . .	130
THE SOUTH END OF THE GALLIPOLI PENINSULA AND THE DARDANELLES ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	136-7

## List of Maps and Charts

	PAGE
THE ATTACK ON THE NARROWS ( <i>Charts</i> ) :	
First Phase—10.45 A.M. to 12.22 P.M. . . . .	141
Second Phase—12.22 P.M. to 1.45 P.M. . . . .	143
Third Phase—1.45 P.M. to Sunset . . . . .	145
THE AUSTRALIAN LANDING NEAR GABA TEPE ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	152
THE LANDING BEACHES ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	161
LINES OF SUPPLY OF THE TURKISH ARMY IN GALLIPOLI ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	171
THE SUVLA BAY LANDING ( <i>Map</i> ) . . . . .	181
BATTLE OF JUTLAND ( <i>Charts</i> ) :	
Track Chart . . . . .	226
The First Stage—3.48 P.M. to 5 P.M. . . . .	228
Action between the Battle Cruiser Fleets . . . . .	229
Opening of the Action between Battle Cruiser Fleets . . . . .	232
German Battle Fleet comes up . . . . .	236
The Junction of the British Fleets . . . . .	240
Von Scheer in Full Retreat . . . . .	245
General Situation about Sunset, May 31 . . . . .	251
GRAPH OF THE UNRESTRICTED SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN BETWEEN FEBRUARY 1 AND JULY, 1917 . . . . .	298

**A HISTORY OF THE  
BRITISH NAVY  
DURING THE WAR**



# A History of the British Navy during the War

## CHAPTER I

### THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR AT SEA

SEA power has never been and can never be solely a thing of battle fleets. The same fertility of resource that has taught naval men to put purpose into the shape and form of the various types which fulfil the navy's normal functions helps them to discover it unerringly in the profusion of odd craft that find a livelihood in time of peace. Under the vague term "auxiliaries" the British navy fathered a motley host of foundlings, and, building upon that spirit which is ingrained in the hearts of British seafarers, taught them its own tradition of silence and reserve, and its readiness to meet any emergency.

The navy in this way gathered to itself a prolific offspring, adequate to that indefinite rôle that lay prepared for it in the changed conditions of to-day. The burdens of the distant blockade sat lightly on its shoulders for this



reason, and it is difficult to see how otherwise the work could have been efficiently carried out. The unending labour of mine sweeping at home, in the Adriatic, about the Dardanelles, and wherever the mine might be found was also performed by the auxiliaries. And the work of hunting down the enemy submarines fell to them when the campaign began to develop its true importance. Manned by fishermen, men of the merchant fleet, and retired officers called from many a backwater in the normal stream of life, this gigantic fleet took to its work with ease and cheerfulness, and grew to the pattern of the navy as we know it.

Even the navy proper included types that had never appeared in a British war before. There were the monitors, vessels of low draught, which could be used for river or inshore work. In effect, these were vast floating forts with guns up ~~to~~ 14-inch in calibre. They were invulnerable to submarine attack, and were, therefore, much used in areas infested by these new vessels. There were the submarines themselves which, at the outbreak of war, had an undefined rôle, and the Royal Naval Air service whose function, as distinct from that of the Army Air Corps, never became definite. There were battle cruisers, the creation of a brilliant naval tactician, which had to confirm the promise offered by their design. Only in spirit was the navy the same as that of Nelson. Outwardly it had grown, changed its form, adopted modern science. Inwardly it was the same service with a craft mellowed by time,

an invincible confidence, a proverbial versatility, and the reserve of true pride.

The landing of the British Expeditionary Force in France and the utilization of the resources of the Empire depended upon our retaining a sufficient control of the sea-routes of the world. The security of British territory and the provision of food for our people were in the keeping of our navy. Further, since our chief antagonist was the second greatest of the Sea Powers, the war must be conducted by water as well as by land. "It is upon the navy," it is set forth in the Articles of War, "that, under the good Providence of God, the wealth, prosperity, and peace of these islands and of the Empire do mainly depend."

The British navy at the beginning of August had reached a point of efficiency both in quality and quantity which was unprecedented in its history. It is true that the growth of German sea-power had relatively reduced its pre-eminence, but the existence of a bold claimant for the Empire of the Ocean had stimulated the spirit of our fleet, and perfected its organization for war. This is not the place to enter into the interminable discussions which since 1906 had raged around the subject. The attempts at reduction, happily frustrated, may well be relegated to oblivion. Ever since Lord Selborne's period at the Admiralty a steady advance may be noted in training and equipment. The establishment of the Royal Fleet Reserve and the Volunteer Naval Reserve, the provision of North Sea bases, the admirable work done by the Committee of Imperial Defence,

#### 4 The British Navy during the War [1914

the development of armament and of battleship designing, the immense improvement in gunnery practice, the revision of the rates of pay, the opening up of careers for the lower deck, and the provision of a naval air service, are landmarks in the advance. Much was due to Lord Fisher and the other Sea Lords; something was due, also, to the civilian First Lords, Mr. M'Kenna and Mr. Winston Churchill. The latter especially flung himself into the work of his department with a zeal and intelligence which were of incalculable value to the country in the hour of need. In the Navy Estimates of March 1914, Parliament sanctioned over fifty-one millions for naval defence, the largest sum ever granted for the purpose.

The Home Fleet, available for the war in the North Sea, was arranged in three units. The First Fleet was divided into four battle squadrons, together with the flagship of the commander-in-chief. The first squadron was made up of eight battleships—Dreadnoughts and super-Dreadnoughts—seven of which carried ten 12-inch guns, while one, the *Marlborough*, had ten 13.5-inch guns, besides secondary armaments. The second squadron contained eight super-Dreadnoughts, each armed with ten 13.5-inch guns. The third squadron was composed of eight pre-Dreadnoughts of the *King Edward VII.* class, carrying four 12-inch, four 9.2-inch, and ten 6-inch guns. The fourth squadron consisted of three Dreadnoughts, each carrying ten 12-inch guns, and one pre-Dreadnought, carrying four 12-inch and ten 9.2-inch

guns. Attached to the First Fleet was a battle-cruiser squadron of four ships, three of which carried eight 13.5-inch guns, and the fourth eight 12-inch guns ; the second cruiser squadron of four armoured cruisers ; the third cruiser squadron of four cruisers of the *Devonshire* class ; the fourth cruiser squadron of four ships of the *Monmouth* class, and one light cruiser, the *Bristol*—the first light cruiser squadron ; a squadron of six gunboats for mine-sweeping ; and four flotillas of destroyers, each with a flotilla cruiser attached. This, the first line of defence of our shores, had behind it the Second Fleet, which had two battle squadrons, the first consisting of eight pre-Dreadnoughts and the second of six. It contained also the fifth and sixth cruiser squadrons ; a mine-layer squadron of seven vessels ; four patrol flotillas consisting of destroyers and torpedo-boats ; and seven flotillas of submarines. Behind the Second Fleet came the Third, containing two battle squadrons, mainly composed of comparatively old ships, and six cruiser squadrons.

Our strength outside home waters may be very roughly summarized. In the Mediterranean fleet we had three battle cruisers, four armoured cruisers, four ordinary cruisers, and a flotilla of seventeen destroyers, besides submarines and torpedo boats. In Eastern waters we had a battleship, two cruisers, and four sloops in the East India squadron ; a battleship, two armoured cruisers, two cruisers, a number of gunboats, eight destroyers, besides submarines and torpedo boats, in the China squadron ; and four cruisers in

## 6 The British Navy during the War [1914

the New Zealand division. The Australian fleet showed a battle cruiser, three cruisers, three destroyers, and two submarines. Various cruisers and gunboats were stationed at the Cape, the west coast of Africa, and the east and west coasts of America, while four armoured cruisers and one ordinary cruiser patrolled the Western Atlantic.

To arrive at our total naval strength we must add the two destroyers purchased from Chile, and the two Turkish battleships, building in England, which were commandeered by the British Government at the outbreak of war. This would give us the following figures for the principal classes :

### BATTLESHIPS AND BATTLE CRUISERS

Super-Dreadnought type . . . .	14
Dreadnought type . . . .	18
Pre-Dreadnought types (1895-1908) . .	38
Super-Dreadnoughts completing . . .	3

Total . . . . .	73
-----------------	----

Armoured cruisers (1901-1908) . . .	34
Cruisers (1890-1914) . . . .	87
Destroyers (1893-1914) . . . .	227
Torpedo-boats (1885-1908) . . . .	109
Submarines (1904-1913) . . . .	75

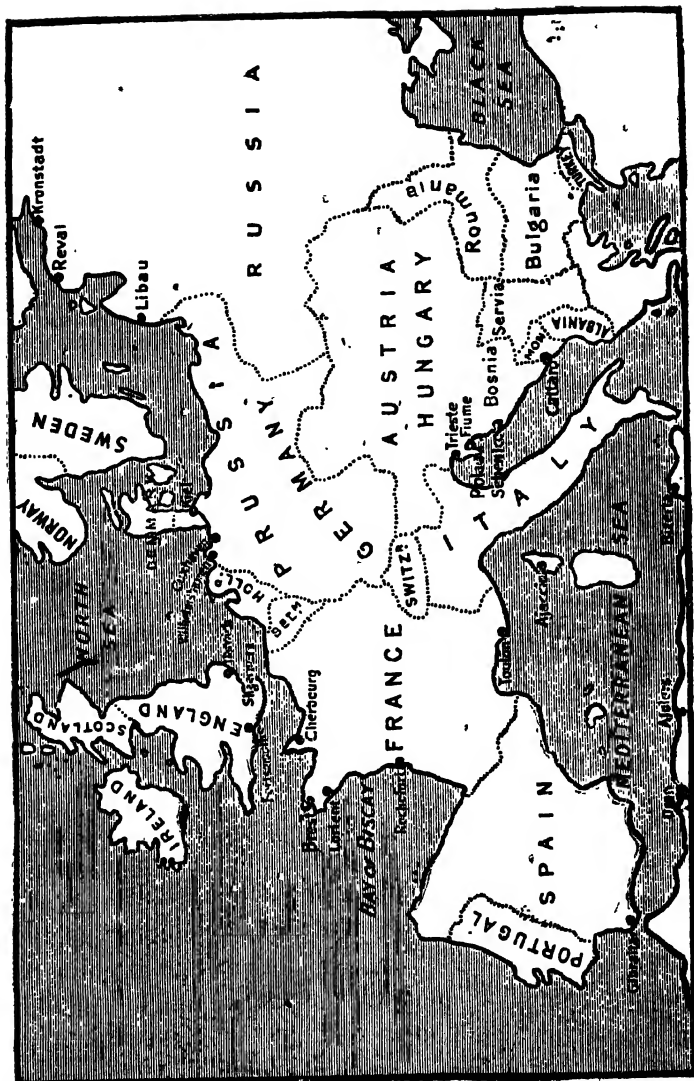
The German navy, the second in the world, was a creation of the past fifteen years, deliberately undertaken for the purpose of challenging British supremacy. The thief begetter was an obscure naval officer called Tirpitz, who in 1897 succeeded Admiral von Hollmann as Naval Minister. With the support of the Emperor, he began to wring

money for the navy out of a reluctant Treasury, and in the face of a jealous army ; and, by dint of a skilful press campaign, succeeded in arousing in the German people a new enthusiasm for maritime power. At the outbreak of war he had held office for fifteen years, and had built up a navy which in *matériel* and *personnel* was second only to one—a marvellous performance for so short a period. The High Sea Fleet consisted of twenty-one battleships, thirteen of them of the Dreadnought type, four battle cruisers, eight light cruisers, and eighty torpedo boats. The total naval strength was—

#### BATTLESHIPS AND BATTLE CRUISERS

Dreadnought type . . . .	13
„ (completing) . . . .	3
Pre-Dreadnought (1891-1908) . . . .	22
Old types (1889-1893) . . . .	8
	—
Total . . . .	46
Armoured cruisers (1892-1913) . . . .	40
Cruisers (1893-1910) . . . .	12
Destroyers (1889-1913) . . . .	152
Torpedo-boats (1887-1898) . . . .	45
Submarines . . . .	40

The German navy was originally regarded as a branch of the army ; naval strategy was conceived of only as an auxiliary to land strategy, and ships were units for coast defence. It had been the task of the modern German sea-lords to emancipate the fleet from the military tradition. The result was that the navy had become a far more democratic profession than the sister service, and had



Map of Naval Bases of the Belligerent Powers.

drawn to it many able men of middle-class birth who were repelled by the junkerdom of the army. It was manned chiefly by conscription ; but about a quarter consisted of volunteers, chiefly dwellers on the coast and on the Frisian and Baltic islands, and men who had deliberately made it their career. The term of service for conscripts was three years, and the training, concentrated in so short a space, was strenuous and highly specialized. The officers were almost to a man professional enthusiasts ; and our own sailors, who had fraternized with them in foreign ports, had borne witness to their efficiency and seamanlike spirit.

The navy of Austria-Hungary had expanded in recent years like that of her ally. Under the inspiration of Admiral Montecuccoli naval expenditure was trebled in the last ten years, and an elaborate ship-building programme undertaken. On the outbreak of war the fleet comprised fifteen battleships, three of them being Dreadnoughts, two armoured and nine light cruisers, fifteen destroyers, fifty-eight torpedo boats, and six submarines. The Dual Monarchy possessed three main naval stations in the Adriatic—Pola, the fleet's headquarters, Trieste, and the Hungarian port of Fiume—while an additional station had been established at Sebenico in Dalmatia.

The French navy had in the matter of invention given the lead to the world, but till recently its size had not kept pace with the quality of its officers, and it had dropped from second to fifth place among the navies of the world. When Admiral



Boué de Lapeyrère became Minister of Marine a great upward movement began, and this was continued under M. Delcassé, who insisted that France must possess a fleet to give her indubitable supremacy in the Mediterranean. When Admiral Boué de Lapeyrère became commander-in-chief of the navy he gathered about him a brilliant coterie of young flag-officers, and sea-training and gunnery made rapid strides. At the beginning of the war France had twenty-four battleships, including ten Dreadnoughts, armed with 12-inch guns, twenty-four cruisers, eight light cruisers, eighty destroyers, 140 torpedo boats, and some fifty submarines, the two last classes representing the very latest types. Her principal base was Toulon on the Mediterranean, and she had also Rochefort on the Bay of Biscay, Brest and Lorient on the Atlantic, Cherbourg on the Channel, as well as Ajaccio and Bonifacio in Corsica, Algiers and Oran in Algeria, and Bizerta in Tunis.

Russia, after the war with Japan, was faced with the problem of constructing her navy anew, and by August, 1914, the reconstruction was far from complete. The Navy Bill of 1912 had provided for the expenditure of £50,000,000 on a building programme to be completed in 1917, and she had aimed at creating a powerful Baltic battle fleet which should be scarcely inferior to any power Germany could place in those waters. But this policy was not given time to mature. *On the outbreak of war she had in the Baltic only four Dreadnoughts, ten armoured cruisers, two*

light cruisers, eighty destroyers, and twenty-four submarines, and a fleet of about half the strength in the Black Sea. Its bases were Kronstadt, an ice-bound port in winter, the minor ice-free base of Libau, and Sveaborg for torpedo craft. The projected ice-free base of Reval was not yet completed.

The mere enumeration of ships does not give any real clue to the effective naval strength of a Power at any one moment, since much depends upon where the fleets are chiefly concentrated. To take the Mediterranean first, the union of France and Britain made the Allies easily superior there ; for, if Italy remained neutral, the Austrian navy could be shut up securely in the Adriatic. This superiority was needed, if France were to transport her African troops in safety and British commerce were to be free to continue the Suez Canal route to India and the East. But the vital theatre of the naval war was the North Sea and the Baltic, where Germany had all her fleet, except one battle cruiser (the famous *Goeben*), two armoured cruisers, and a few light cruisers.

The German seaboard is divided by the peninsula of Denmark into two completely separate areas—the North Sea and the Baltic coasts. The entrance to the Baltic was virtually closed to an enemy from the west, as the Sound and the Great Belt had been mined by Denmark, a neutral, and an enemy's fleet was forbidden to seek neutral pilotage. At the same time, passage between the two seas was possible for Germany by means of

the Kiel Canal, widened in 1914 so as to admit the largest battleships, and running from Kiel Bay on the Baltic to the estuary of the Elbe. A certain portion of the German fleet must remain in the Baltic to watch the Russian fleet and protect the north coast of Prussia ; but this portion need not be fixed, but could be added to or subtracted from at pleasure.

The strength of Russia lay chiefly in torpedo craft, and the German Baltic fleet was, therefore, likely to be composed of fast cruisers and destroyers. At the outbreak of war it seems to have consisted of none of the older battleships, several armoured and one or two smaller cruisers, and a number of destroyers, from which it would appear that Germany contemplated using the Baltic as an exercise ground, since the high seas were forbidden her.

The German High Sea Fleet was inferior to the British Home Fleet, so far as capital ships were concerned, by more than 40 per cent., and this inferiority was much greater in the class of cruisers and destroyers. It was, therefore, the aim of Admiral von Ingenohl to avoid a battle, until he had reduced our lead by the slow attrition which submarines, mines, and the casualties of the sea might be expected to produce. The policy of a sudden raid that " day " which German naval officers had regularly toasted, under the inspiration of Admiral Livonius's heroics—was made almost impossible by the manner in which war broke out and the complete preparedness of the British at sea. The Fabian line of strategy had many

advantages from the German point of view. It gave ample scope for the ingenuity and boldness of mine-layers and submarines, two branches of her sea-service to which Germany had paid special attention. It kept Germany's fleet intact against the time when, her arms victorious on land, she could sally forth to fight a dispirited enemy. Further, a period of forced inaction must have a wearing effect upon the nerves of the British navy. For a fleet which believes itself invincible and longs for combat, it is a hard trial to wait day after day without descriing an enemy's pennon on the horizon. The modern battleship has not the constant small duties which existed in the ships of Nelson's time, and it was hoped that the men and officers might grow stale and apathetic. Or, in the alternative, they might risk an attack upon the German fleet in its home waters, an attack which, in the German view, would result in the crushing defeat of the invader.

The German plan, perfectly sound strategy in the circumstances, was made possible by the peculiar configuration of the German coast, and the magnificent shelter it provided. The few hundred miles between Emden and the Danish frontier are deeply cut by bays and river mouths, and the western part is screened by the chain of Frisian islands from Borkum to Wangeroog. In the centre of the bight lies Heligoland, a strong fortress with a wireless station. Close to the Dutch frontier is the estuary of the Ems, with the town of Emden. Then comes a low, sandy stretch of



Map of Naval Bases in the North Sea.

▲ Detach Base.

coast, indented with tidal creeks, till the estuary of the Jade is reached at Wilhelmshaven, which is the fortified base of the North Sea Fleet. Next comes the estuary of the Weser, with the important dockyard of Bremerhaven. Last comes the estuary of the Elbe, with Cuxhaven at its mouth, opposite the debouchment of the Kiel Canal, and at its head the great city and dockyard of Hamburg. Each estuary is a network of mazy channels among the sands, requiring skilful piloting, and in themselves a strong defence against a raid. There is, further, the screen of the islands, behind which operations could take place unnoticed, and there is the Kiel Canal to furnish a back-door to the Baltic. The coast is followed by a double line of railway from Hamburg to Emden, which taps no populous district and carries no traffic, but is meant solely for strategic purposes. This Frisian corner was the key to German naval defence. Visitors had always been shepherded away from vital points, and the notion of espionage there had given the German people sleepless nights. Captain Bertrand Stewart, an English Territorial officer—the first of his service to give his life in this war—was condemned to three years' imprisonment in a fortress on the charge of visiting various towns and islands where he had never set foot; and so feverish was public and official feeling in Germany on the subject that the evidence of a single and much discredited spy was sufficient to secure this officer's conviction without a word of German protest.

## 16 The British Navy during the War [1914]

At the great review of the British fleet in July, 1914, two hundred and sixteen ships of war passed before the King—only half the total number, but in itself the most powerful fleet ever mustered in British waters in a state of instant readiness for battle. Though diplomacy had not yet broken down, the conduct of Germany had given the chiefs of the navy much to think about. It had been reported on good authority that the German fleet was being placed on 'a war footing, that certain German liners which could be used as transports or auxiliary cruisers had altered or cancelled their sailings, and that German naval officers in foreign countries had been recalled. No sooner was the review over than our work of preparation began. The squadrons went to the stations appointed to them, took in war stores, and sent ashore whatever might impede them in battle. On Monday, 3rd August, at the memorable Cabinet meeting which decided British policy, Mr. Churchill was able to inform his colleagues that that morning the last steps had been taken, and that the whole sea power of Britain was in readiness for war.

From that moment the fleet disappeared. Dwellers on our southern and eastern coasts in the bright weather of early August could see an occasional cruiser or destroyer speeding on some errand, or an escorted mine-sweeper busy at its perilous task. But the great battleships had gone. Somewhere out on the blue waters, or hidden in some nook of our northern or western shores, lay the vigilant admirals of England.

The British fleet had not fought a great battle

at sea since Trafalgar. Since those days, only a century removed in time, we had changed the conditions of naval warfare more than they had changed between Themistocles and Nelson. The old wooden walls, the unrifled guns, the boarders with their cutlasses, belonged to an earlier world. We had no longer to scour the ocean for the enemy's fleet. Wireless telegraphy, aerial reconnaissance, and swift destroyers brought us early news of a foe. The gun power of a modern battleship would have wrecked the Spanish Armada with one broadside, and the enemy could now be engaged at a distance of many miles. Sea fighting was no more the clean and straightforward business of the old days. Destruction dwelt in every element when there was no sign of a hostile pennon. Aircraft dropped bombs from the clouds; unseen submarines, like sword-fish, pierced the hull from the depths; and anywhere might lurk those mines which destroyed, like some convulsion of nature, with no human enemy near. We had to fight under new conditions, with new strategy and new weapons, with far greater demands on the intellect and a far more deadly strain on the nerves. Most things had changed, but two things remained unaltered—the cool daring of our sailors and the conviction that the seas were the unquestionable heritage of our race.

To the command of the fleet there had been appointed Admiral Sir John Jellicoe, with Rear-Admiral Charles Madden as his Chief of Staff. Those who shared R. L. Stevenson's view as to the racy nomenclature of British seamen must



have found something reassuring in the name of the new commander-in-chief. Admiral Jellicoe had served as a lieutenant in the Egyptian War of 1882. Specializing in gunnery, he had become a commander in 1891, and was one of the few survivors of the ill-fated *Victoria*, which went down off the Syrian coast. He became a captain in 1897, and served on the China station, commanding the Naval Brigade and acting as chief staff officer at the Peking expedition of 1900, where he was severely wounded. Thereafter he became successively Naval Assistant to the Controller of the Navy, Director of Naval Ordnance and Torpedoes, Rear-Admiral in the Atlantic Fleet, a Lord Commissioner of the Admiralty and Controller of the Navy, Vice-Admiral commanding the Atlantic Fleet, Vice-Admiral commanding the Second Division of the Home Fleet, and second Sea Lord of the Admiralty. He brilliantly distinguished himself by the command of the "Red" Fleet at the naval manœuvres of 1913. Rear-Admiral Madden, his Chief of Staff, who was also his brother-in-law, had already served with him at the Admiralty. Sir John Jellicoe was one of the officers chiefly responsible for the modern navy of Britain, and enjoyed not only the admiration and complete confidence of his colleagues, but a peculiar popularity among all grades of British seamen. His nerve and self-possession were not less conspicuous than his professional skill, and in the wearing months ahead of him he had need of all resources of mind and character.

Those who expected a speedy and decisive Trafalgar in the south end of the North Sea were doomed to disappointment. Admiral von Ingenohl was too wise a commander to indulge in quixotic adventures. But the day after the declaration of war the first shots were fired. German mine-layers, there is reason to believe, had been busy in various pacific guises for the past week, dropping mines over a wide area extending from opposite Harwich to far up in the Scottish waters. On Wednesday, 5th August, the mine-layer *Koenigin Luise* was overtaken by the destroyer *Lance* and sunk in six minutes. On Thursday morning the British light cruiser *Amphion*, Captain Cecil Fox, struck one of the mines laid by the *Koenigin Luise*, and foundered, with serious loss of life, though the captain, the principal officers, and the larger half of the crew were saved. On Sunday, the 9th, German submarines attacked a cruiser squadron of the main British fleet, without doing any damage, and one submarine was sunk by the protected cruiser *Birmingham*, which steamed straight for it, and ran it down.

It was in the Mediterranean that during that week the naval interest was keenest. At the outbreak of war two German warships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, were off the Algerian coast. This can scarcely have come about by accident, and it is not improbable that when these ships received their first sailing orders Germany calculated either upon the assistance of Italy or the neutrality of Britain, and intended her finest battle cruiser to assist in the one case Italy and Austria against France and

Britain, or in the other Austria against France. The *Goeben* was the fastest armoured vessel in the German fleet, displacing 22,640 tons, attaining a speed of 28 knots, and carrying as armament ten 11-inch, twelve 5.9-inch, and twelve 21-pounder guns. The *Breslau* was a fast light cruiser, with about the same rate of speed, and a displacement of 4,478 tons. She was the vessel sent by Germany to Albanian waters to join the international squadron which kept the unfortunate Mpret in countenance.\* Both of these ships had specially great coal capacity, and the *Breslau* could cover 6,000 knots without taking in fresh fuel. They were, therefore, admirably suited for commerce destroyers, and had they continued at large might have done much to embarrass the sea-borne trade of the Allies.

They began by firing a few shots into the unprotected Algerian coast towns of Bona and Philippeville, but did little harm. They then turned north-west, with the object, apparently, of running for the Strait of Gibraltar, but were headed off by the British fleet. They seem to have shown their pursuers a very clean pair of heels, and early on Wednesday morning, 5th August, appeared at Messina. There they went through a somewhat theatrical performance. The captains and officers made their wills, and deposited their valuables, including signed portraits of the Kaiser, with the German consul; the decks were cleared for action, and with the bands playing "*Heil dir im Siegerkranz*," sailed out—so said the German papers—under a blood-red sunset. But the blood

was only in the sunset, for they sought not battle but safety.

Escaping by some mischance our fleet, and going at full speed eastward, they encountered, off Cape Matapan, a British cruiser, the *Gloucester*, a ship slightly larger than the *Breslau*, which, with great gallantry, attempted to engage, and damaged the plates of the *Goeben* and the smoke stack of the *Breslau*. But the superior speed of the Germans brought them through. They were next heard of in the Dardanelles at the end of the week. Presently they had reached Constantinople, where they passed into the power of the Turkish Government, already secretly in league with the Central Powers. It was not a brilliant achievement for Germany's chief battle cruiser, and for the moment it gravely lowered the prestige of the untried German navy.

But more important than any isolated incident was the swift and methodical sweeping in of the German mercantile marine, which began on 4th August. The blockade, which the more sober of German naval writers had always feared, had come to pass. In every quarter of the globe our cruisers spread their net. German merchantmen in the ports of the Empire were detained, and hundreds of ships were made prizes of in the high and the narrow seas. Some escaped to the shelter of neutral ports, especially those of the United States, but none got back to Germany. In a week German sea-borne commerce had virtually ceased to exist. Without striking a blow, by the sheer menace of our omnipresent

navy, we had annihilated the trade of the enemy and protected our own. A few German cruisers and armed merchantmen were still at large, but their number was too small and their life too precarious to affect our commerce. The Government very properly began by guaranteeing part of the risks of maritime insurance; but soon the rates fell of their own accord to a natural level, as it became clear how ample was our security. It was calculated at the outbreak of war that British losses in the first six months might rise to 10 per cent. of vessels engaged in foreign trade. A return issued in the beginning of October showed that of our mercantile marine we had lost up to that date only 1.25 per cent., while Germany and Austria had lost each 10 per cent. of their total shipping.

It is true that no Power has complete command of the sea so long as a hostile fleet remains undestroyed. But if the hostile fleet chooses to shut itself up in port, then for all practical purposes, and until it comes forth, the command lies with the fleet that keeps the open water. The German fleet behind Heligoland, and the Austrian in Pola, might as well not have existed for all the influence they had on the oceans of the world. Every sea except the Baltic was a *mare clausum* to all but the submarine craft of our enemies, and these had not yet been developed to a pitch of efficiency and lawlessness at which they seriously modified our command of the sea.

## CHAPTER II

## THE BATTLE OF THE BIGHT OF HELIGOLAND

THE work of the British navy during the first two months of war was so completely successful in its main purpose that the ordinary man scarcely recognized it. He expected a theatrical *coup*, a full-dress battle, or a swift series of engagements with enemy war-ships. When he found that nothing happened, he began to think that something was amiss. But the proof of our success was that nothing happened—nothing startling, that is to say, for every day had its full record of quiet achievement. Three-fourths of the game was already ours without striking a blow. The British people depended for their very livelihood on their sea-borne commerce; that went on as if there were no war. The rates of marine insurance fell, and freights did not increase beyond the limits dictated by the law of supply and demand. We moved our armed forces about the world as we desired, not as our enemies permitted. Germany's foreign trade, on which she depended in the long run for munitions of war and the maintenance of most of her industries, ceased with dramatic suddenness. Our naval predominance was instantly proved by the impotence of our opponents.

The German policy was what the wiser among

our people had always desired. No doubt if Admiral von Ingenohl had sailed forth with his Grand Fleet in the early days of August and been summarily sent to the bottom, it would have been even more convenient. But, short of such a wholesale destruction, things could not have fallen out more opportunely than they did. Assume that they had gone otherwise, and that the German admiral, instead of sheltering in the Elbe, had sent out some of his best cruisers and battle cruisers to scour the high seas. The performances of the *Emden*, which we shall later consider, would have been many times multiplied. We should have lost scores of merchantmen, and a number of our smaller fighting units. Marine insurance rates and freights would have mounted high, prices would have risen, and there would have been heard at home the first mutterings of commercial panic. The transport of troops from South Africa, Australia, and Canada would have been difficult, and we should have had to weaken dangerously our Grand Fleet to supply escorts. Indeed, with a dozen big German cruisers at large, it might have seemed for a week or two that the offensive had passed to the enemy, and that Britain, not Germany, was on her defence. Of course, we should have ended by destroying the raiders; the cruisers would have had a short life or a long life, but they would not have returned home. Nevertheless this weakening of the enemy's naval strength would have been dearly paid for by the congestion of our ordinary life at that most critical time, the first weeks of war, and by

the inevitable interference with our military plans. Had Germany been bolder at sea there might have been no British force to hold the Allied left in the difficult days from the Sambre to the Marne.

One of the chief objects of a navy in war is to protect the commerce of its country. This purpose we achieved with ease, and it would have been mere folly to throw away capital ships in an assault on the retreat of an enemy which had virtually allowed our mastery of the sea to go unchallenged. On land an army fights its way yard by yard to a position from which it can deal a crushing blow. But a fleet needs none of these preliminaries. As soon as the enemy chooses to appear the battle can be joined. Hence von Ingenohl was right in saving his fleet for what he considered a better chance, and we were right in not forcing him unduly. Naval power should be used, not squandered, and the mightiest fleet on earth may be flung away on a fool's errand. It should not be forgotten that the strength of a fleet is a more brittle and less replaceable thing than the strength of an army. New levies can be called for on land, and tolerable infantry trained in a few months. But in the navy it takes six years to make a junior officer, it takes two years to build a cruiser, and three years to replace a battleship. A serious loss in fighting units is, for any ordinary naval war, an absolute, not a temporary, calamity.

It was the business, then, of the British fleet to perform its principal duty, the protection of



British trade; it was not its business to break its head against the defences of 'Wilhelmshaven or Kiel. At the same time, it had to watch incessantly for the emergence of German ships, and, if possible, entice them out of their sanctuary. Cautious and well-reasoned boldness was the quality demanded, and on 28th August, 1914, the day when Sir John French's retreat had reached the Oise, it earned its reward in the first important naval action of the war.

The Battle of the Bight of Heligoland was in its way such a little masterpiece of naval strategy and tactics that it deserves to be examined with some attention. First, we must realise the various forces engaged, which may be set down in the order of their appearance in the action.

1. *Eighth Submarine Flotilla* (Commodore Roger Keyes).—  
Parent ships: Destroyers *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*.  
Submarines: D2, D8, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9.
2. *Destroyer Flotillas* (Commodore R. Y. Tyrwhitt).—Flag-  
ship: Light cruiser *Arethusa*.  
First Destroyer Flotilla: Light cruiser *Fearless* (Captain Blunt). — Destroyers: *Acheron*, *Archer*, *Ariel*, *Attack*, *Badger*, *Beaver*, *Defender*, *Ferret*, *Forester*, *Goshawk*, *Hind*, *Jackal*, *Lapwing*, *Lizard*, *Phoenix*, *Sandfly*.  
Third Destroyer Flotilla: *Laertes*, *Laforey*, *Lance*, *Landrail*, *Lark*, *Laurel*, *Lawford*, *Legion*, *Leonidas*, *Lennox*, *Liberty*, *Linnet*, *Llewelyn*, *Louis*, *Lucifer*, *Lydiard*, *Lysander*.
3. *First Light-Cruiser Squadron* (Commodore W. R. Goodenough). — *Southampton*, *Falmouth*, *Birmingham*, *Lowestoft*, *Nottingham*.

4. *First Battle-Cruiser Squadron* (Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty).—*Lion*, *Princess Royal*, *Queen Mary*, *New Zealand*. Joined at sea by *Invincible* (Rear-Admiral Moore) and by destroyers : *Hornet*, *Hydra*, *Tigress*, and *Loyal*.
5. *Seventh Cruiser Squadron* (Rear-Admiral A. H. Christian).—Armoured cruisers : *Euryalus*, *Cressy*, *Hogue*, *Aboukir*, *Sutlej*, *Bacchante*, and light cruiser *Amethyst*.

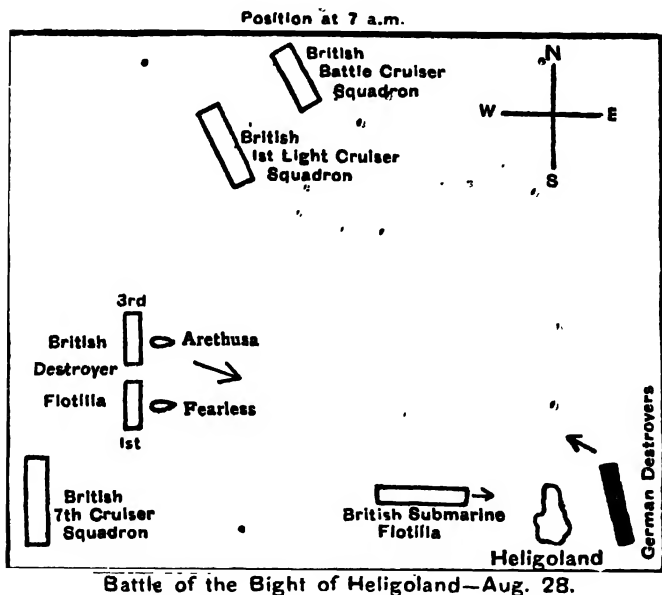
The battle cruisers were the largest and newest of their class, displacing some 27,000 tons, with a speed of 29 knots, and an armament each of eight 13.5 and sixteen 4-inch guns. The First Light-Cruiser Squadron contained ships of the "town" class—5,500 tons, 25 to 26 knots, and eight or nine 6-inch guns. The Seventh Cruiser Squadron were older ships from the Third Fleet—12,000 tons and 21 knots. The First Destroyer Flotilla contained destroyers each of about 800 tons, 30 knots, and two 4-inch and two 12-pounder guns. The Third Flotilla was composed only of the largest and latest type—965 tons, 32 knots, and three 4-inch guns. Of the accompanying cruisers the *Arethusa*—the latest of an apostolical succession of vessels of that name—was the first ship of a new class ; her tonnage was 3,750, her speed 30 knots, and her armament two 6-inch and six 4-inch guns. Her companion, the *Fearless*, had 3,440 tons, 26 knots, and ten 4-inch guns. The two small destroyers which accompanied the submarines, the *Lurcher* and the *Firedrake*, had 765 tons, 35 knots, and two 4-inch and two 12-pounder guns.

## 28 The British Navy during the War [1914

Ever since the 9th of August the seas around Heligoland had been assiduously scouted by the submarines E6 and E8. German cruisers—apparently the *Strassburg* and the *Stralsund*—had shown a certain activity, and had succeeded in sinking a number of British trawlers; but the several “drives” which we organized had sent them back to their territorial waters. The *Fearless* had also been on patrol work, and on 21st August had come under the enemy’s shell fire. By the 26th our intelligence was complete, and at midnight the submarine flotilla, under Commodore Keyes, sailed from Harwich for the Bight of Heligoland. All the next day, the 27th, the *Lurcher* and the *Firedrake* scouted for the submarines. At five o’clock on the evening of the 27th the First and Third Destroyer Flotillas, under Commodore Tyrwhitt, left Harwich, and some time during that day the Battle-Cruiser Squadron, the First Light-Cruiser Squadron, and the Seventh Cruiser Squadron also put to sea. The rendezvous appointed was reached early on the morning of the 28th, the waters having been searched for hostile submarines before dawn by the *Lurcher* and the *Firedrake*.

The chronicle must now concern itself with hours and minutes. The first phase of the action began just before 7 a.m. on the 28th. The morning had broken windless and calm, with a haze which limited the range of vision to under three miles. The water was like a mill-pond, and out of the morning mist rose the gaunt rock of Heligoland, with its forts and painted lodging-houses and

crumbling sea-cliffs. It was the worst conceivable weather for the submarines, since in a calm sea their periscopes were easily visible. The position at seven o'clock was as follows: Close to Heligoland, and well within German territorial waters, were Commodore Keyes' eight submarines, with



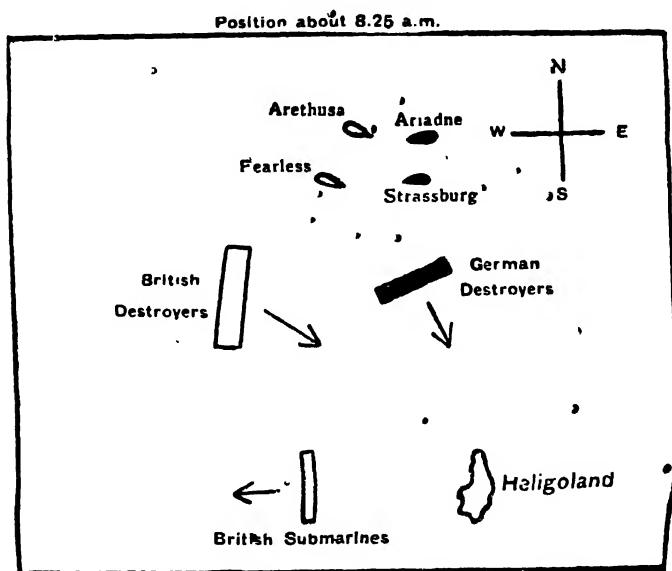
his two small destroyers in attendance. Approaching rapidly from the north-west were Commodore Tyrwhitt's two destroyer flotillas, while behind them, at some distance and a little to the east, was Commodore Goodenough's First Light-Cruiser Squadron. Behind it lay Sir David Beatty's battle cruisers, with the four destroyers in attendance. A good deal to the south, and about due

west of Heligoland, lay Admiral Christian's Seventh Cruiser Squadron, to stop all exit towards the west.

The submarines, foremost among them E6, E7, and E8, performed admirably the work of a decoy. They were apparently first observed by a German seaplane, and presently from behind Heligoland came a number of German destroyers. These were presently followed by two cruisers, and the submarines and their attendant destroyers fled westwards, while the British destroyer flotillas came swiftly down from the north-west. At the sight of the latter the German destroyers turned to make for home; but the British flotillas, led by the Third, along with the *Arethusa*, altered their course to port in order to head them off. "The principle of the movement," says the official report, "was to cut the German light craft from home and engage them at leisure in the open sea." The ~~destroyers~~ gave little trouble, and our own ships of that class were quite competent to deal with them. But between our two attendant cruisers and the two German cruisers a fierce battle was waged. About eight o'clock the *Arethusa*—*præclarum et venerabile nomen*—was engaged with the German *Ariadne*, while the *Fearless* was busy with a four-funnelled vessel which some of our men thought was the *Yorck*, but which was probably the *Strassburg*. The *Arethusa*, till the *Fearless* drew the *Strassburg's* fire, was exposed to the broadsides of the two vessels, and was considerably damaged. About 8.25, however, one of her shots shattered the forebridge of the *Ariadne*

and killed the captain, and the shattered vessel drew off towards Heligoland, whither the *Strassburg* soon followed.

Meantime the destroyers had not been idle. They had sunk the leading boat of the German flotilla, V187, and had damaged a dozen more.



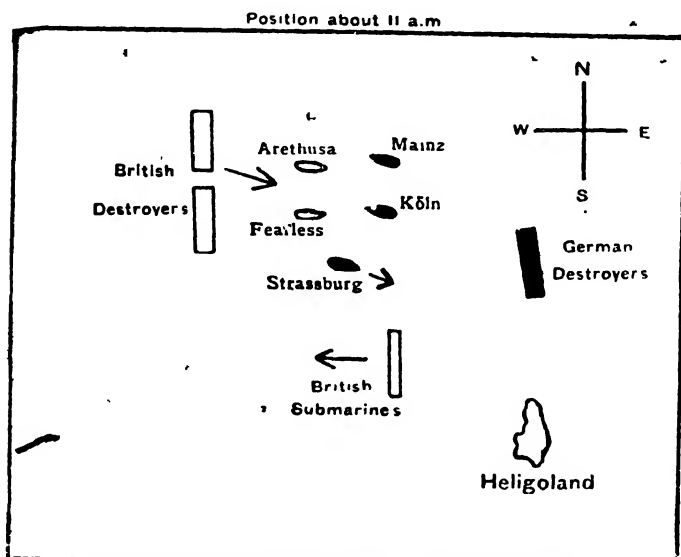
Battle of the Bight of Heligoland—Aug. 28.

With great heroism they attempted to save the German sailors now struggling in the water, and lowered boats for the purpose. These boats, as we shall see, came into deadly peril during the next phase of the action.

On the retreat of the *Ariadne* and the *Strassburg* the destroyer flotillas were ordered to turn westward. The gallant *Arethusa* was in need of

## 32 The British Navy during the War [1914

attention, for a water-tank had been hit, and all her guns save one were temporarily out of action. She was soon repaired, and only two of her 4-inch guns were left still out of order. Between nine and ten o'clock, therefore, there was a 'lull in the fight, which we may take as marking the break



Battle of the Bight of Heligoland—Aug. 28.

between the first and second phases of the battle. The submarines, with their attendants, *Lurcher* and *Firedrake*, were still in the immediate vicinity of Heligoland, as well as some of the destroyers which had boats out to save life.

About ten o'clock the second phase began. The Germans believed that the only hostile vessels in the neighbourhood were the submarines, de-

stroyers, the *Arethusa* and the *Fearless*, and they resolved to take this excellent chance of annihilating them. About ten Commodore Tyrwhitt received a wireless message from Commodore Keyes that the *Lurcher* and *Firedrake* were being chased by three German cruisers. These were the *Mainz*, the *Köln*, and a heavier vessel, which may have been the *Yorck* or the *Strassburg*. The German cruisers came on the boats of the First Flotilla busy saving life, and thinking apparently that the British had adopted the insane notion of boarding, opened a heavy fire on them. The small destroyers were driven away, and two boats, belonging to the *Goshawk* and the *Defender*, were cut off under the guns of Heligoland. At this moment submarine E4 (Lieutenant-Commander E. W. Leir) appeared alongside. By the threat of a torpedo attack he drove off the German cruiser for a moment, and took on board the British seamen.

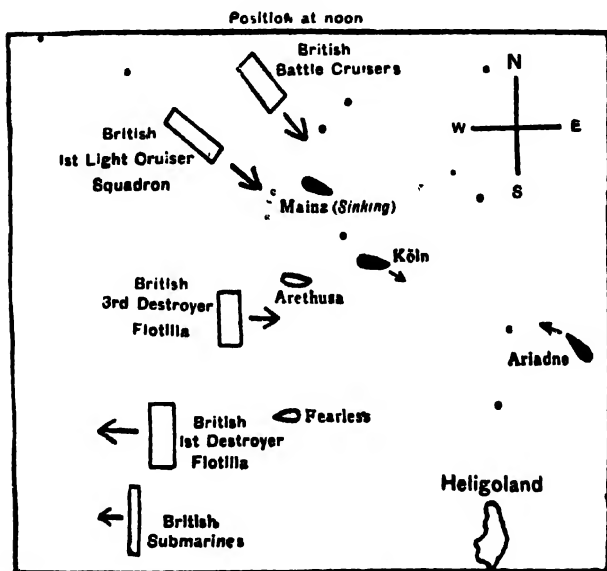
The *Arethusa*, the *Fearless*, and the destroyers boldly engaged the three enemy cruisers, and for a little were in a position of great peril. They had already suffered considerably, and their speed and handiness must have been reduced. The first incident was an artillery duel between the *Arethusa* and the vessel which we may call the *Strassburg*, which resulted in the retirement of the latter. Then came the *Mainz*, which was so severely handled that her boilers blew up, and she became little better than a wreck. There remained the *Köln*, which began a long-range duel with the *Arethusa*. So far the destroyer flotillas had



covered themselves with glory, but their position was far from comfortable. They were in German home waters, not far from the guns of Heligoland (which the fog seems to have made useless at that range); they were a good deal crippled, though still able to fight; and they did not know but that at any moment the blunt noses of Admiral von Ingenohl's great battleships might come out of the mist. The battle had now lasted for five hours—ample time for the ships in the Elbe to come up. Commodore Tyrwhitt about eleven had sent a wireless signal to Sir David Beatty asking for help, and by twelve o'clock that help was sorely needed.

It was on its way. Admiral Beatty, on receipt of the signal, at once sent the First Light-Cruiser Squadron south-eastwards. The first vessels, the *Falmouth* and the *Nottingham*, arrived on the scene of action about twelve o'clock, and proceeded to deal with the damaged *Mainz*. By this time the First Destroyer Flotilla had retired westward, but the Third Flotilla and the *Arethusa* were still busy with the *Köln*. Admiral Beatty had to take a momentous decision. There was every likelihood that some of the enemy's great armoured and battle cruisers were close at hand, and he wisely judged that "to be of any value the support must be overwhelming." It was a risky business to take his vessels through a mine-strewn and submarine-haunted sea; but in naval warfare the highest risks must be run. Hawke pursued *Conflans* in a stormy dusk into Quiberon Bay, and Nelson before Aboukir risked in the

darkness the shoals and reefs of an uncharted sea. So Admiral Beatty gave orders at 11.30 for the battle cruisers to steam E.S.E. at full speed. They were several times attacked by submarines, but their pace saved them, and when later the *Queen Mary* was in danger she avoided it by a



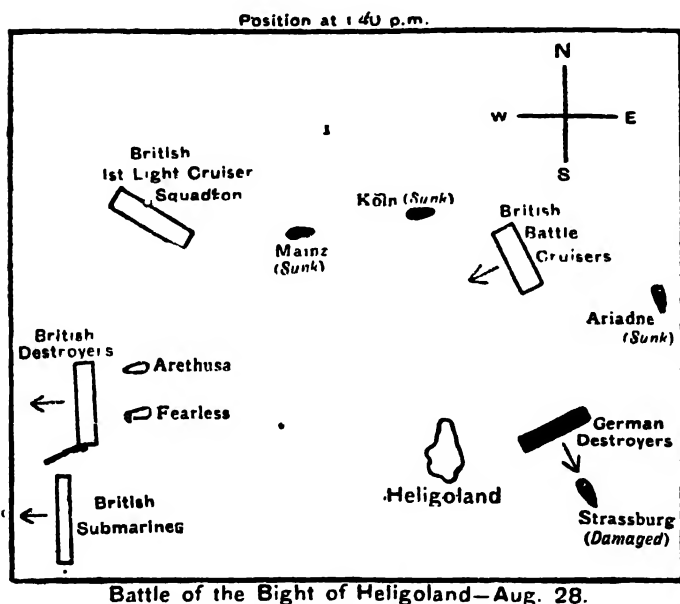
Battle of the Bight of Heligoland—Aug. 28.

skilful use of the helm. By 12.15 the smoke-blackened eyes of the *Arethusa's* men saw the huge shapes of our battle cruisers emerging from the northern mists.

Their advent decided the battle. They found the *Mainz* on fire and sinking by the head, and steered north-eastward to where the *Arethusa* and the *Köln* were hard at work. The *Lion* came

## 36 The British Navy during the War [1914

first, and she alone among the battle cruisers seems to have used her guns. Her immense fire power and admirable gunnery beat down all opposition. The *Köln* fled before her, but the *Lion's* guns at extreme range hit her and set her on fire. Presently the luckless *Ariadne* hove in



sight from the south—the forerunner, perhaps, of a new squadron. Two salvos from the terrible 13.5-inch guns sufficed for her, and, burning furiously, she disappeared into the haze. Then the battle cruisers circled north again, and in ten minutes finished off the *Köln*. She sank like a plummet with every soul on board.

At twenty minutes to two Admiral Beatty

turned homeward. The submarines and the destroyer flotillas had already gone westward, and the Light-Cruiser Squadron, in a fan-shaped formation, preceded the battle cruisers. Admiral Christian's squadron was left to escort the damaged ships and defend the rear. By that evening the whole British force was in our own waters without the loss of a single unit. The *Arethusa* had been badly damaged, but in a week was ready for sea again. Our casualties were thirty-two killed and fifty-two wounded, among the former being two brilliant officers, Lieutenant-Commander Nigel Barttelot of the destroyer *Liberty*, and Lieutenant Eric Westmacott of the *Arethusa*.

The Germans lost two new cruisers, the *Mainz* and the *Köln*, and one older cruiser, the *Ariadne*. A four-funnelled cruiser, the *Strassburg* or the *Yorck*,\* was seriously damaged, as were at least seven destroyers. Only one destroyer, the V187, was actually sunk, though our Admiralty mentioned two. The broken destroyers which put into Kiel some days later did not suffer, as we at first believed, from the Heligoland fight, but from a misadventure in the Baltic. At least 700 of the German crews perished, and there were 300 prisoners.

Of the Battle of the Bight it may fairly be said that it was creditable to both victors and vanquished. The Germans fought in the true

\* The *Yorck* was destroyed later by a mine (Chap. IV). The *Strassburg* was one of the vessels engaged in the raid on Scarborough and Hartlepool in December (Chap. IV).

### 38 The British Navy during the War [1914

naval spirit, and the officers stood by their ships till they went down. The gallantry of our own men was conspicuous, as was their readiness to run risks in saving life, a readiness which the enemy handsomely acknowledged. The submarine flotilla fought under great disadvantages, but the crews never wavered, and their attendant destroyers, the *Lurcher* and the *Firedrake*, were constantly engaged with heavier vessels. The two destroyer flotillas were not less prominent, and, having taken the measure of the German destroyers, did not hesitate to engage the enemy's cruisers. But the chief glory belongs to the *Arethusa* and the *Fearless*, who for a critical hour bore the chief brunt of the battle. For a time they were matched against three German cruisers, which between them had a considerably greater force of fire. Nowadays much of naval fighting is a mathematical certainty, for, given the guns and the speed, you can calculate the result. But it was the good fortune of the *Arethusa* to show her mettle in a conflict which more resembled the audacious struggles of Nelson's days. It is a curious fact that though we had some sixty vessels in the action from first to last, only four or five were hit. The light-cruiser squadron and the battle cruisers decided the battle, and while their blows were deadly, the enemy never got a chance of retaliation. From twelve o'clock onward it was scientific modern destruction; before that it was any one's fight.

The strategy which advised the action was admirable in conception and execution, and not

less admirable was the tactical skill which provided for the co-operation of different classes of vessels, proceeding from different bases, within a narrow area and at the right moment. Had the German battleships emerged it may be presumed that we were prepared for that eventuality. Undoubtedly the action justified to the full three classes of our recent naval constructions—the big battle cruisers, the new light cruisers of the *Arethusa* type, and the large destroyers that belonged to the Third Flotilla. It proved, too, that the largest ships might safely operate among the enemy's submarines if only their speed was high—a lesson of immense importance for future naval warfare.

The immediate consequence of the Battle of the Bight was a change in German naval policy. Von Ingenohl was confirmed in his resolution to keep his battleships in harbour, and not even a daring sweeping movement of the British early in September, when our vessels came within hearing of the church bells on the German coast, could goad him into action. But he retaliated by an increased activity in mine-laying and the use of submarines. In the land warfare of the Middle Ages there came a time when knights and horses were so heavily armoured that they lost mobility, and what had been regarded as the main type of action ended in stalemate. Wherefore, since men must find some way of conquering each other, came the chance for the hitherto despised lighter troops, and the archers and spear-

men began to win battles like Courtrai and Bannockburn. A similar stalemate was now reached as between the capital ships of the rival navies. The British battleships were vast and numerous; the German fleet, less powerful at sea, was strong in its fenced harbour. No decision could be reached by the heavily armed units, so the war passed into the hands of the lesser craft. For a space of more than two months the Germans fought almost wholly with mines and submarines.

One truth should be remembered, which at this period was somewhat forgotten by the British people. Command of the sea, unless the enemy's navy is totally destroyed, does not mean complete protection. This has been well stated in a famous passage by Admiral Mahan\* :—

“The control of the sea, however real, does not imply that an enemy's single ships or small squadrons cannot steal out of ports, and cross more or less frequented tracts of ocean, make harassing descents upon unprotected points of a long coast-line, enter blockaded harbours. On the contrary, history has shown that such evasions are always possible, to some extent, to the weaker party, however great the inequality of naval strength.”

This has been true in all ages, and is especially true now that the mine and submarine have come to the assistance of the weaker combatant. Our policy was to blockade Germany, so that she should suffer and our own life go on unhindered. But the blockade could only be a watching blockade; it could not seal up every unit of the enemy's naval strength. To achieve the latter

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\* *Influence of Sea Power upon History*, p. 14.

we should have had to run the risk of missing the very goal at which we aimed. It was our business to see that Germany did nothing without our knowledge; and to encourage her ships to come out that we might fall upon them. Her business was to make our patrolling as difficult as possible. To complain of British losses in such a task was to do precisely what Germany wished us to do, in order that caution might take the place of a bold and aggressive vigilance.

Germany had laid in the first days of the war a large mine-field off our eastern coasts, and early in September, by means of trawlers disguised as neutrals, she succeeded in dropping mines off the north coast of Ireland, which endangered our Atlantic commerce and the operations of our Grand Fleet. The right precaution—the closing of the North Sea to neutral shipping, unless specially accompanied—was not taken till too late in the day, and even then was too perfunctorily organized. A section of the Royal Naval Reserve was detached for the task of mine-sweeping, and trawlers, manned by East Coast fishermen, were busy at all hours off our shores. It was a hard and perilous employment, how perilous the many casualties revealed; and the work of these crews, inconspicuous and unadvertised as it was, deserves to be ranked along with more sounding deeds among the heroisms of the war. The mine-field, for all its terrors, was not productive of much actual loss to our fighting strength. During the first two months of war, apart from the *Amphion*, the only casualty was the old gunboat *Speedy*,



which struck a mine and foundered in the North Sea on 3rd September.

The submarine was a graver menace. On 5th September the *Pathfinder*, a light cruiser of 2,940 tons, with a crew of 268, was torpedoed off the Lothian coast and sunk, with great loss of life. Eight days later the German light cruiser *Hela*, a vessel slightly smaller than the *Pathfinder*, was sunk by the British submarine E9 (Lieutenant Max Horton) in wild weather between Heligoland and the Frisian coast—an exploit of exceptional boldness and difficulty. During that fortnight a great storm raged, and our patrols found it hard to keep the seas, many of the smaller destroyers being driven to port. This storm led indirectly to the first serious British loss of the war. Three cruisers of an old pattern, the *Cressy*, *Hogue*, and *Aboukir*, which had been part of Admiral Christian's Seventh Cruiser Squadron in the Battle of the Bight of Heligoland, had for three weeks been engaged in patrolling off the Dutch coast. It does not appear why three large ships carrying heavy crews were employed on a duty which could have been performed better and more safely by lighter vessels. No screen of destroyers was with them at the moment, owing to the storm. On the 22nd of September the sky had cleared and the seas fallen, and about half-past six in the morning, as the cruisers proceeded to their posts, the *Aboukir* was torpedoed, and began to settle down. Her sister ships believed she had struck a mine, and closed in on her to save life. Suddenly the *Hogue* was struck by two torpedoes, and began to sink.

Two of her boats had already been got away to the rescue of the *Aboukir's* men, and as she went down she righted herself for a moment, with the result that her steam pinnace and steam picket-boat floated off. The *Cressy* now came up to the rescue, but she also was struck by two torpedoes, and sank rapidly. Three trawlers in the neighbourhood at the time picked up the survivors in the water and in the boats, but of the total crews of 1,459 officers and men only 779 were saved. In that bright, chilly morning, when all was over within a quarter of an hour, the British sailor showed his unsurpassed discipline and courage. Men swimming in the frosty sea or clinging naked to boats or wreckage cheered each other with songs and jokes. "The men on the *Hogue*," wrote an eye-witness, "stood quietly by waiting for the order to jump, and passing the time in slipping off their clothes." The survivors were positive that they saw at least three submarines, but the German official account mentions only one — the *U9*, under Captain-lieutenant Otto Weddigen.

The fate of the three cruisers was not only a disaster; it was a mistake of the kind which is inevitable at the beginning of a naval war, before novel conditions are adequately realized. Faulty staff work somewhere at headquarters was to blame. There was no reason why three such vessels should have been employed at all on patrol duty; and if they were to be employed they should never have been sent out without a screen of destroyers. Again, they had been kept prome-

## 44 The British Navy during the War [1914

nading on the same beat for some time, which was simply an invitation to submarines to come out and attack them. Lastly, no instructions had been given them as to what to do in the case of one of their number being torpedoed, with the result that the *Hogue* went to assist the *Aboukir*, and the *Cressy* to assist the *Hogue*, and all three perished. The Admiralty realized this grave omission too late, and a few days after the disaster issued a statement, from which we quote :—

“ The sinking of the *Aboukir* was, of course, an ordinary hazard of patrolling duty. The *Hogue* and *Cressy*, however, were sunk because they proceeded to the assistance of their consort, and remained with engines stopped endeavouring to save life, thus presenting an easy and certain target to further submarine attacks. The natural promptings of humanity have in this case led to heavy losses which would have been avoided by a strict adhesion to military considerations. Modern naval war is presenting us with so many new and strange situations that an error of judgment of this character is pardonable. But it has become necessary to point out for the future guidance of His Majesty's ships, that the conditions which prevail when one vessel of a squadron is injured in a mine-field, or is exposed to submarine attack, are analogous to those which occur in an action, and that the rule of leaving ships to their own resources is applicable so far as any rate as large vessels are concerned.”

The Admiralty correctly attributed the catastrophe to an error of judgment, but the error was not that of the captains of the lost vessels.

The third method of weakening British sea power was by the attack upon merchantmen by light cruisers. Apparently Germany sent forth no new vessels of this type after the outbreak of

war, and her activities were confined to those which were already outside the Narrow Seas, especially those under Admiral von Spee's command at Kiaochau. So far as September is concerned, we need mention only the *Emden* and the *Koenigsberg*. The former was to provide the world with a genuine tale of romantic adventure, always welcome among the grave realities of war, and in her short life to emulate the achievements and the fame of the *Alabama*. She appeared in the Bay of Bengal on 10th September, and within a week had captured seven large merchantmen, six of which she sank. Next week she arrived at Rangoon, where her presence cut off all sea communication between India and Burma. On 22nd September she was at Madras, and fired a shell or two into the environs of the city, setting an oil tank on fire. On the 29th she was off Pondicherry, and the last day of the month found her running up the Malabar coast. There for the present we leave her, for the tale of her subsequent adventures belongs to another chapter. The *Koenigsberg* had her beat off the East Coast of Africa. Her chief exploit was a dash into Zanzibar harbour, where, on 20th September, she caught the British cruiser *Pegasus* while in the act of repairing her boilers. The *Pegasus* was a seventeen-year-old ship of 2,135 tons, and had no chance against her assailant. She was destroyed by the *Koenigsberg's* long-range fire.

The exploits of the two German commerce-raiders were magnified because they were the exceptions, while the British capture of German

merchantmen was the rule. We did not destroy our captures, because we had many ports to take them to, and they were duly brought before our prize courts. In addition, we had made havoc of Germany's converted liners. The *Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, which had escaped from Bremerhaven at the beginning of the war, and which had preyed for a fortnight on our South Atlantic commerce, was caught and sunk by the *Highflyer* near the Cape Verde Islands. On 12th September the *Berwick* captured in the North Atlantic the *Spreewald*, of the Hamburg-Amerika line. On 14th September the *Carmania*, Captain Noel Grant, a British converted liner, fell in with a similar German vessel, the *Cap Trafalgar*, off the coast of Brazil. The action began at 9,000 yards, and lasted for an hour and three-quarters. The *Carmania* was skilfully handled, and her excellent gunnery decided the issue. Though the British vessel had to depart prematurely owing to the approach of a German cruiser, she left her antagonist sinking in flames.

Other instances might be quoted, but these will suffice to show how active British vessels were in all the seas. The loss of a few light cruisers and a baker's dozen of merchantmen was a small price to pay for an unimpaired foreign trade and the practical impotence of the enemy. Modern inventions give the weaker power a better chance for raiding than in the old days; but in spite of that our sufferings were small compared with any other of our great wars. It is instructive to contrast our fortunes during the struggle with

Napoleon. Then, even after Trafalgar had been fought, French privateers made almost daily captures of English ships in our home waters. Our coasts were frequently attacked, and the inhabitants of the seaboard went for years in constant expectation of invasion. In the twenty-one years of war we lost 10,248 British ships. Further back in our history our inviolability was even more precarious. In the year after Agincourt the French landed in Portland. Seven years after the defeat of the Armada the Spanish burned Penzance and ravaged the Cornish coasts. In 1667 the Dutch were in the Medway and the Thames. In 1690 the French burned Teignmouth, and landed in Sussex; in 1760 they seized Carrickfergus; in 1797 they landed at Fishguard. In 1775 Paul Jones captured Whitehaven, and was the terror of our home waters. The most prosperous war has its casualties in unexpected places.

As for the alleged slowness in bringing the enemy's fleet to book, it should be remembered that in the Revolution Wars England had to wait a year for the first naval battle, Howe's victory of the 1st of June; while Nelson lay for two years before Toulon, and Cornwallis for longer before Brest. "They were dull, weary, eventless months"—to quote Admiral Mahan—"those months of waiting and watching of the big ships before the French arsenals. Purposeless they surely seemed to many, but they saved England. The world has never seen a more impressive demonstration of the influence of sea power upon its history. Those far-distant, storm-beaten ships,

upon which the Grand Army never looked, stood between it and the dominion of the world."

In Nelson's day we had one advantage which is now lost to us. We were not hampered by a code of maritime law framed in the interests of unmaritime nations. The Declaration of Paris of 1856, among other provisions, enacted that a neutral flag covered enemy's merchandise except contraband of war, and that neutral merchandise was not capturable even under the enemy's flag. This Declaration, which was not accepted by the United States, has never received legislative ratification from the British Parliament; but we regarded ourselves as bound by it, though various efforts had been made to get it rescinded in times of peace by those who realized how greatly it weakened the belligerent force of a sea power. The Declaration of London of 1909 made a further effort to codify maritime law.\* It was signed by the British plenipotentiaries, though Parliament refused to pass the statutes necessary to give effect to certain of its provisions. In some respects it was more favourable to Britain than the Declaration of Paris, but in others it was less favourable, and it was consistently opposed by many good authorities on the subject. Generally speaking, it was more acceptable to a nation like Germany than to a people situated like ourselves.†

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\* Parliamentary Paper, Cd. 4554 of 1909.

† The following are a few examples of the way in which it impaired our naval power: It was made easy to break a blockade, for the right of a blockading Power to capture a blockade-runner did not cover the whole period of her voyage

When war broke out the British Government announced that it accepted the Declaration of London as the basis of our maritime practice. The result was a position of some confusion, for the consequences of the new law had never been fully realized. Under it, for example, the captain of the *Emden* could justify his sinking of British ships instead of taking them to a port for adjudication. One provision, which seems to have been deduced from it, was so patently ridiculous that it was soon dropped—that belligerents (that is, enemy reservists) in neutral ships were not liable to arrest. Presently successive Orders in Council, instigated by sheer necessity, altered the Declara-

and was confined to ships of the blockading force (Articles 14, 16, 17, 19, 20); stereotyped lists of contraband and non-contraband were drawn up, instead of the old custom of leaving the question to the discretion of the Prize Court (Articles 22, 23, 24, 25, 28); a ship carrying contraband could only be condemned if the contraband formed more than half its cargo; a belligerent warship could destroy a neutral vessel without taking it to a port for judgment; the transfer of an enemy vessel to a neutral flag was presumed to be valid if effected more than thirty days before the outbreak of war (Article 55); the question of the test of enemy property was left in high confusion (Article 58); a neutral vessel, if accompanied by any sort of warship of her own flag, was exempt from search; belligerents in neutral vessels on the high seas were exempt from capture (based on Article 45). With the Declaration of London would go most of the naval findings of the Hague Conference of 1907. The British delegates who assented to the Declaration of London proceeded on the assumption that in any war of the future Britain would be neutral, and so endeavoured to reduce the privileges of maritime belligerents.



tion of London beyond recognition. The truth was, that we were engaged in a war to which few *a priori* rules could be made to apply. Germany had become a law unto herself, and the wisest course for the Allies was to frame their own code, which should comply not only with the half-dozen great principles of international equity, but with the mandates of common sense.

## CHAPTER III

## THE BATTLES OF CORONEL AND THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

IN the preceding chapter we carried the history of the war at sea down to the end of September, 1914, a period during which we fought one successful action and made a large number of captures, but one in which—towards the close at any rate—Germany chose to fight solely with smaller craft, and all our casualties were due to the mine and the submarine. The same conditions held during October. Apart from the work of our cruisers in the outer seas, there is little to chronicle. We had one serious disaster, since one of our super-Dreadnoughts struck a mine off the north coast of Ireland and sank, with the loss of a single life. On 15th October, also, the old cruiser *Hawke* was torpedoed and sunk off Aberdeen, and nearly 500 men perished. We had one success, for on the afternoon of 17th October, the new light cruiser *Undaunted*, Captain Cecil Fox, accompanied by the destroyers *Lance*, *Legion*, and *Loyal*, sank the four German destroyers S115, S117, S118, and S119 off the Dutch coast. Our total naval casualties during the first three months of war, leaving out of account the naval division interned in Holland, were just under 6,000, of which well over 4,000

## 52 The British Navy during the War [1914

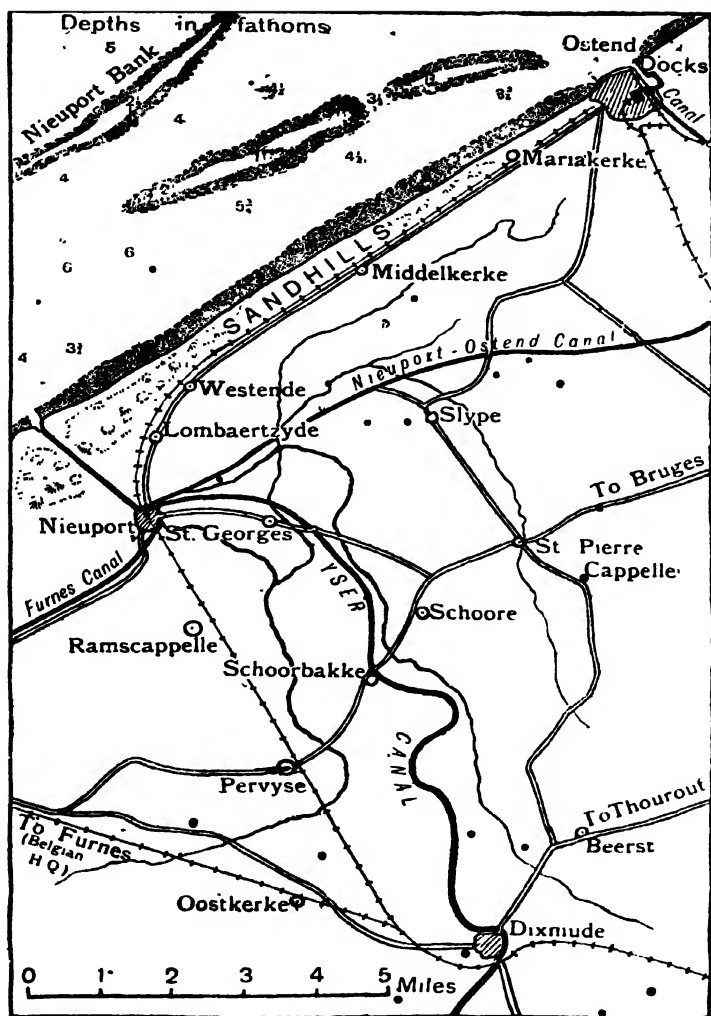
were dead. In modern war by land the proportion of killed to wounded is usually about one to five, in sea war it is almost ten to one.

About the middle of October the navy appeared in an operation which they were destined to repeat throughout the war. The Germans, after the fall of Antwerp, were making towards the Channel coast. They had at the moment a preponderance of force that should have proved decisive but for the navy. The Belgians had fallen back before the enemy.

The Yser was the natural line for them to hold, for, more than French or British, they were accustomed to war among devious water-courses. The German force against them was part of von Beseler's army from Antwerp—not less than 60,000 men—and the Wurtembergers were moving rapidly from the south to join them. The Belgians had by the 17th no other supports for their line than two divisions of French Territorials on their right, and in Dixmude a brigade of French Marines, for d'Urbal's 8th Army was still in process of formation.

By the evening of the 17th von Beseler, to whom the first coast attack had been entrusted, had moved west from Middelkirke and Westende, and was in position just east of Nieuport. In the previous two days there had been an intermittent bombardment, and on the 17th the 1st and 4th Belgian Divisions had been driven across the Yser, but had regained the right bank during the night. Early on the morning of the 18th he attacked with the object of seizing the Nieuport

1914]



The Yser Front, Nieuport to Dixmude.

## 54 The British Navy during the War [1914

bridge. The Belgians were drawn up east of the Yser, holding in strength the three main bridges. The sudden and violent assault of a superior force upon the left wing of a much-enduring army would in all likelihood have succeeded, and if at this date the Belgians had been pushed well back from the Yser towards Furnes, von Beseler would have been in Dunkirk in two days and in Calais the day after. But at this most critical moment help arrived from an unexpected quarter. Suddenly the German right resting on the sand-dunes found itself enfiladed. Shells fell in their trenches from the direction of the sea, and, looking towards the Channel, they saw the ominous grey shapes of British warships. Two and a half centuries before, when Turenne met the Spaniards at the Battle of the Dunes, he had been greatly aided by Cromwell's fleet, which shelled the enemy's wing. History repeated itself almost in the same spot, and once more the French front fought in alliance with the British navy.

Germany had never dreamed of any serious danger from the sea. She believed from the charts that off that shelving shore, with its yeasty coastal waters, there was no room for even a small gun-boat to get within range, and she did not imagine that Britain would venture her ships in such perilous seas. Every student of naval history knows the dangers of the "banks of Zeeland," and at this very place, between Nieuport and Ostend, the *San Felipe*, from the Spanish Armada, had been wrecked. But at the outbreak of war three strange vessels lay at Barrow, built to the

order of the Brazilian Government. Broad in the beam, and shallow of draught, they had been intended as patrol ships for the river Amazon. In August the Admiralty, with fortunate prescience, purchased these strange craft, which appeared in the Navy List as the *Humber*, the *Severn*, and the *Mersey*. They were heavily armoured, and carried each two 6-inch guns mounted forward in an armoured barbette, and two 4.7 howitzers aft, while four 3-pounder guns were carried amidships. Their draught was only 4 feet 7 inches, so that they could move in shoal water where an ordinary warship would run aground. With the first news of the German advance along the coast the Admiralty saw the value of their purchase. On the evening of 17th October the three monitors\* left Dover under the command of Rear-Admiral the Hon. Horace Hood, and sailed for the Flemish coast. The German attack on the 18th had hardly started when Hood began his bombardment. Von Beseler brought his heavy guns into action, but they were completely outranged, and several batteries were destroyed.

\* The term "monitors" is not strictly accurate as applied to these vessels. The original *Monitor* was a low-freeboard, light-draught turret ship, invented by Ericsson, which fought the *Merrimac* in Hampton Roads during the American Civil War. Its appearance, when cleared for action, was not unlike a big submarine operating on the surface. The vital feature of the *Monitor*, apart from its light draught, was that its guns were mounted in a central closed turret, so that they could be trained in any direction and used in narrow channels where broadsides would be impossible.

## 56 The British Navy during the War [1914

For ten days this strange warfare continued. Admiral Hood's flotilla was presently joined by other craft, chiefly old ships of little value, for the Admiralty did not dare to risk the newer ships in so novel a type of battle. The old cruiser *Brilliant* was present, the gunboat *Rinaldo*, several destroyers, including the *Falcon*, and on the 27th there arrived the *Venerable*—the name of Duncan's flagship at the Texel—a 15,000 ton battleship, mounting four 12-inch and twelve 6-inch guns, which came into action from outside the shoals. French warships acted with the British, and the bombardment extended east to Ostend. The Germans were unable to retaliate. Their big guns did not reach us, and their submarines could not manœuvre in the shallow water, and the torpedoes which they fired, being set at a much greater depth than the monitors' draught, passed harmlessly beneath their hulls. Our naval guns swept the country for some six miles inland, and the German right was pushed away from the coast. Nieuport was saved, and the German attack on the Yser was possible only beyond the range of the leviathans from the sea.

But the Germans still clung to the coast route, and the Duke of Wurtemberg had now taken command, bringing with him the pick of the Wurtemberg regiments. The Allies, too, had received reinforcements, for General Grossetti had brought up from Rheims the 42nd Division of the 16th Corps of the first line, and was holding the centre opposite Pervyse. The critical period of the attack had been the days between the 17th

and the 22nd, and the British warships had averted that peril.

But the opening of November saw a change in the situation. The centre of interest shifted to the Southern Pacific and the Southern Atlantic, and in two months we fought two important naval battles. To understand the events which led up to them, we must go back to what happened at the outbreak of war.

When Admiral von Spee, with the German Pacific Squadron, left Kiao<sup>2</sup>chau early in August, he succeeded in collecting seven vessels from the China and Australian stations. One of these, the *Emden*, was detached for commerce raiding in the Indian Ocean, with what success we have seen, while the light cruiser *Karlsruhe*, noted for its speed, became a privateer in the South Atlantic. There remained with him two armoured cruisers, the *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst*, and three light cruisers, the *Dresden*, *Leipzig*, and *Nürnberg*. The first two were sister ships, both launched in 1906, with a tonnage of 11,400 and a speed of at least 23 knots. They carried 6-inch armour, and mounted eight 8.2-inch, six 5.9-inch, and eighteen 21-pounder guns. The *Dresden* was a sister ship of the *Emden*—3,540 tons, 24½ knots, and ten 4.1-inch guns. The *Nürnberg* was slightly smaller—3,350 tons, her armament was the same, and her speed was about half a knot quicker. Smaller still was the *Leipzig*—3,200 tons, with the same armament as the other two, and a speed of over 22 knots. This squadron set itself to prey upon our commerce routes, remembering



that the British navy was short in cruisers of the class best fitted to patrol and guard the great trade highways. Admiral von Spee sailed for the western coast of South America, and found coaling and provisioning bases on the coast of Ecuador and Colombia, and in the Galapagos Islands. The duties of neutrals were either imperfectly understood or slackly observed by some of the South American states at the beginning of the war, and the German admiral seems to have been permitted the use of wireless stations which gave him valuable information as to the enemy's movements.

Early in August a small British squadron set sail to protect the southern trade routes thus menaced. It was commanded by Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock, a capable and most popular sailor, who had served in the Sudan and at the relief of Peking, and had distinguished himself in the work of saving life at the wreck of the *Delhi*. He had in his squadron, when formed, a twelve-year-old battleship, the *Canopus*, two armoured cruisers, the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*, the light cruiser *Glasgow*, and an armed liner, the *Otranto*, belonging to the Orient Steam Navigation Company. None of his vessels was very strong either in speed or armament. The *Canopus* belonged to a class which had been long obsolete, her tonnage was 12,950, her speed 19 knots, and her armament four 12-inch, twelve 6-inch, and ten 12-pounder guns, all of an old-fashioned pattern. Her armour belt was only six inches thick. The *Good Hope* was also twelve

years old ; her tonnage was 14,100, her speed 23 knots, and her armament two 9.2-inch, sixteen 6-inch, and twelve 12-pounder guns. The *Monmouth* was a smaller vessel of 9,800 tons, with the same speed, and mounting fourteen 6-inch and eight 12-pounder guns. The *Glasgow*, which was stationed on the south-east coast of America, was a much newer vessel, and had a speed of 25 knots. Her tonnage was 4,800, and her armament two 6-inch and ten 4-inch guns. '

Admiral Cradock's squadron began by sweeping the North Atlantic, and on 14th August reached Halifax, where the Admiral moved his flag to the *Good Hope*. It then sailed to Bermuda, and through the West Indies to the coasts of Venezuela and Brazil. Then it cruised for a little about the Horn, and visited the Falkland Islands. By the third week of October it was in the Pacific, moving up the coast of Chile on the look-out for Admiral von Spee. The officers knew well that the enemy were the stronger, for something had happened to the *Canopus*, which had dropped behind for repairs, and the *Otranto* was, of course, no match for even a small cruiser. Reinforcements were hourly expected from Britain or the Mediterranean, but for some reason, still unexplained, these were not forthcoming. One officer wrote on 12th October : " From now to the end of the month is the critical time, as it will decide whether we shall have to fight a superior German force coming from the Pacific before we can get reinforcements from home or the Mediterranean. We feel that the Admiralty ought to have a better force here,

## 60 The British Navy during the War [1914

and take advantage of our three to two superiority. But we shall fight cheerfully whatever odds we have to face." And the surgeon of the *Good Hope* wrote on 25th October: "We think the Admiralty have forgotten their trade-route squadron 10,000 miles from London town. Five German cruisers against us. What's the betting on the field? Pray to your Penates we may prevent them concentrating." Admiral Cradock did not fall into a trap, as was at one time suggested; he knew that when he met von Spee he would meet an enemy more than his match.

He went first to Coronel, then on to Valparaiso, and then back to Coronel to send off some cables. The *Glasgow*, to whose officers we owe the story of the fight, left Coronel at 9 o'clock on the morning of 1st November, sailing north, and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon sighted the enemy. She made out the two big armoured cruisers leading, and the light cruisers \* following in open order, and at once sent a wireless signal to the flagship, which the Germans seem to have jammed. By 5 o'clock, however, the *Good Hope* came up, and the *Monmouth* had already joined the *Glasgow* and the *Otranto*. Both squadrons were now moving southward, the Germans having the in-shore course. The British were led by the *Good Hope*, with the *Monmouth*, *Glasgow*, and *Otranto* following in order; the Germans by the *Scharn-*

\* The evidence of the number of German light cruisers is conflicting, but on the whole it seems probable that only the *Dresden* and the *Nürnberg* were present.

*horst*, with the *Gneisenau*, *Dresden*, and *Nürnberg* following.

We can reconstruct something of the picture. To the east was the land, with the snowy heights of the southern Andes fired by the evening glow. To the west burned one of those flaming sunsets which the Pacific knows, and silhouetted against its crimson and orange were the British ships, like woodcuts in a naval handbook. A high sea was running from the south, and half a gale was blowing. At first some twelve miles separated the two squadrons, but the distance rapidly shrank till it was eight miles about 6.18 p.m. About 7 o'clock the squadrons were converging, and the enemy's leading cruiser opened fire at seven miles. By this time the sun had gone down behind the horizon, but the lemon afterglow showed up the British ships, while the German were shrouded in the inshore twilight. Presently the enemy got the range, and shell after shell hit the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*, while the bad light and the spray from the head seas made good gunnery for them almost impossible.

At 7.50 there was a great explosion on the *Good Hope*, which had already been set on fire. The flames leaped to an enormous height in the air, and the doomed vessel, which had been drifting towards the enemy's lines, soon disappeared below the water. The *Monmouth* was also on fire and down by the head, and turned away seaward in her distress. Meantime the *Glasgow* had received only stray shots, for the battle so far had been waged between the four armoured

cruisers. But as the *Good Hope* sank and the *Monmouth* was obviously near her end, the enemy cruisers fell back and began to shell the *Glasgow* at a range of two and a half miles. That the *Glasgow* escaped was something of a miracle. She was scarcely armoured at all, and was struck by five shells at the water line, but her coal seems to have saved her.

The moon was now rising, and the *Glasgow*, which had been trying to stand by the *Monmouth*, saw the whole German squadron bearing down upon her. The *Monmouth* was past hope, so she did the proper thing and fled. By ten minutes to nine she was out of sight of the enemy, though she occasionally saw flashes of gun-fire and the play of searchlights, for fortunately a flurry of rain had hidden the unwelcome moon. She steered at first W.N.W., but gradually worked round to south, for she desired to warn the *Canopus*, which was coming up from the direction of Cape Horn. Next day she found that battleship, two hundred miles off, and the two proceeded towards the Straits of Magellan.

It is not for us to judge whether Admiral Cradock did rightly in entering upon this desperate battle. Probably it would have made small difference if he had waited for the *Canopus*, for though that vessel carried big guns, she was hopelessly slow. At any rate, he took the heroic course, and he and his 1,650 officers and men went to their death in the spirit of Drake and Grenville. The Germans had two light cruisers to our one, for the *Otranto* was negligible, but these vessels were never



seriously in action, and the battle was won in the duel between the armoured cruisers. The *Good Hope* mounted two 9.2-inch guns, but these were old-fashioned, and were put out of action at the start. The 6-inch guns, which she and the *Monmouth* possessed, were no match for the broadsides of twelve 8.2-inch guns fired by the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau*. The German vessels were also far more heavily armoured, and they had the inestimable advantage of speed. They were able to get the requisite range first, and crippled Cradock before he could reply, and they had a superb target in his hulls silhouetted against the afterglow of sunset. The Battle of Coronel was fought with all conceivable odds against us.

The news woke the British Admiralty up to the necessity of dealing finally with Admiral von Spee. Lord Fisher had succeeded Prince Louis of Battenberg as First Sea Lord, and one of the earliest acts of his administration was the dispatch of Rear-Admiral Sir Frederick Doveton Sturdee, who had been chief of the War Staff at the Admiralty, with a squadron to the South Atlantic. He had with him the *Invincible* and the *Inflexible*, the two first battle cruisers built by Britain. These vessels had a tonnage of 17,250, a normal speed of 25 knots, which could be increased under pressure to 28, and were each armed with eight 12-inch guns so placed that all eight could be fired on either broadside. Their armour was 7-inch plates. He had also three armoured cruisers, the *Carnarvon*—10,850 tons, 22.3 knots, and an armament of four

7.5-inch and six 6-inch guns ; the *Kent* and the *Cornwall*, each of 9,800 tons, 23 knots, and an armament of fourteen 6-inch and eight 12-pounder guns. At sea he was joined by the light cruiser *Bristol*, which belonged to the West Atlantic station, and was of the same class as the *Glasgow*, and he was accompanied by the armed liner *Macedonia*. Somewhere in the South Atlantic he picked up the *Glasgow*, which had made her way through the Magellan Straits.

A trap was cunningly laid for the victorious von Spee. If all tales be true, a device was employed which forms an excellent example of the "double-bluff." A wireless message was sent to the *Canopus*, bidding her proceed to Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands, where, she was informed, she would be perfectly safe, since the new guns for the forts had already arrived. This message was intercepted by the Germans, as it was meant to be, and, as was also intended, they regarded it as a ruse, designed to mislead them as to the security of the *Canopus*. They believed that all talk of forts and guns was nonsense, as it was, and that the *Canopus* lay in Port Stanley an easy prey. Admiral von Spee, therefore, resolved to make a prize of her, and at the same time to capture the wireless station at Port Stanley, which would give him a real strategic advantage. After the Battle of Coronel, he had lingered for some time on the coast of Chile, probably waiting for his colliers, but on 15th November he left the island of Juan Fernandez, and headed for Cape Horn. The Japanese fleet was beginning to make

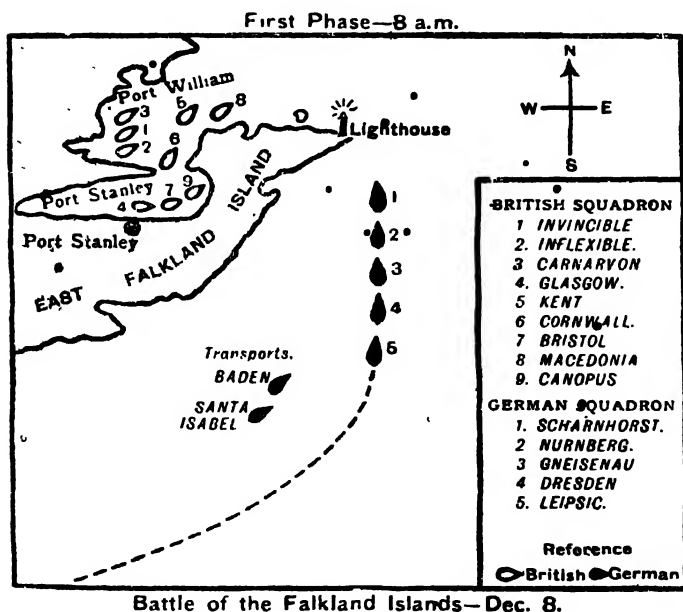


things awkward for him in the Pacific. His intention, after he had disposed of the *Canopus*, was to sail across the Atlantic to the South African coast, where he might have caught the Union force which had landed at Luderitz Bay, and interfered, with disastrous effects, in the local war.

Admiral Sturdee's expedition was kept a complete secret, a wonderful achievement when we remember that our ports were full of German spies and that naval information had a knack of finding its way very speedily to the enemy. On the morning of 7th December the British squadron arrived at Port Stanley, which lies at the eastern corner of the East Island. The Falklands, with their bare brown moors shining with quartz, their endless lochans, their prevailing mists, their grey stone houses, and their population of Scots shepherds, look like a group of the Orkneys or Outer Hebrides set down in the southern seas. Port Stanley is a deeply-cut gulf leading to an inner harbour on the shores of which stands the little capital. The low shores on the south side almost give a vessel a sight of the outer sea. The entrance had been defended to some extent by mines. December the 7th was spent by the British squadron in coaling. The *Canopus*, the *Glasgow*, and the *Bristol* were in the inner harbour, while the *Invincible*, *Inflexible*, *Carnarvon*, *Kent*, and *Cornwall* lay in the outer gulf.

About daybreak on the morning of the 8th, Admiral von Spee arrived from the direction of

Cape Horn. He sent one of his light cruisers ahead to scout, and this vessel reported the presence of two British ships, probably the *Macedonia* and the *Kent*, which would be the first vessels visible to a ship rounding the islands. Upon this von Spee gave the order to prepare



for battle, expecting to find only the remnants of Cradock's squadron. The Germans advanced in line, the *Gneisenau* leading, followed by the *Nürnberg*, the *Scharnhorst*, the *Dresden*, and the *Leipzig*, and steered north-east towards the entrance of the port.

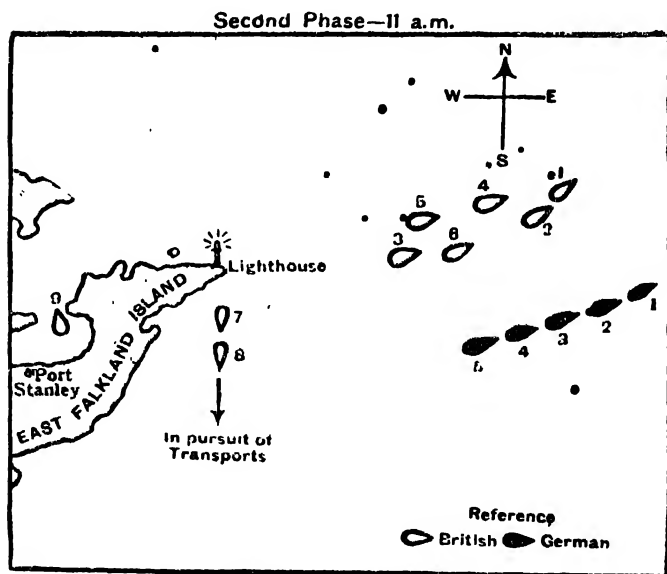
At 8 o'clock the signal station announced the presence of the enemy. It was a clear fresh

morning, with a bright sun, and light breezes from the north-west. All our vessels had finished coaling, except the battle cruisers, which had begun only half an hour before. Orders were at once given to get up steam for full speed. The battle cruisers raised steam with oil fuel, and made so dense a smoke that the German look-outs did not detect them. The Germans fired a shell at the wireless station about 9, and the *Canopus* had a shot at the *Scharnhorst* over the neck of land, directed by signal officers on shore. At 9.30 von Spee came abreast the harbour mouth, and was able to see the strength of the British squadron. He at once altered his course and put to sea, while Admiral Sturdee's command streamed out in pursuit.

First went the *Kent* and then the *Glasgow*, followed by the *Carnarvon*, the battle cruisers, and ~~the~~ *Cornwall*. The Germans had two transports with them, the *Baden* and the *Santa Isabel*, and these fell back to the south of the island, with the *Bristol* and the *Macedonia* in pursuit. The *Canopus* remained in the harbour. At about 10 o'clock the two forces were some twelve miles apart, von Spee steering about due east. The *Invincible* and the *Inflexible* quickly drew ahead, but had to slacken speed to 20 knots to allow the cruisers to keep up with them. At 11 o'clock about eleven miles separated the two forces. At five minutes to one we had drawn closer, and opened fire upon the *Leipzig*, which was last of the German line.

Von Spee, seeing that flight was impossible,

prepared to give battle. So far as the battle cruisers were concerned, it was a foregone conclusion, for they had the greater speed and the longer range. His three light cruisers turned and made off to the south, followed by the *Kent*, the *Glasgow*, and the *Cornwall*, while the *Invincible*,



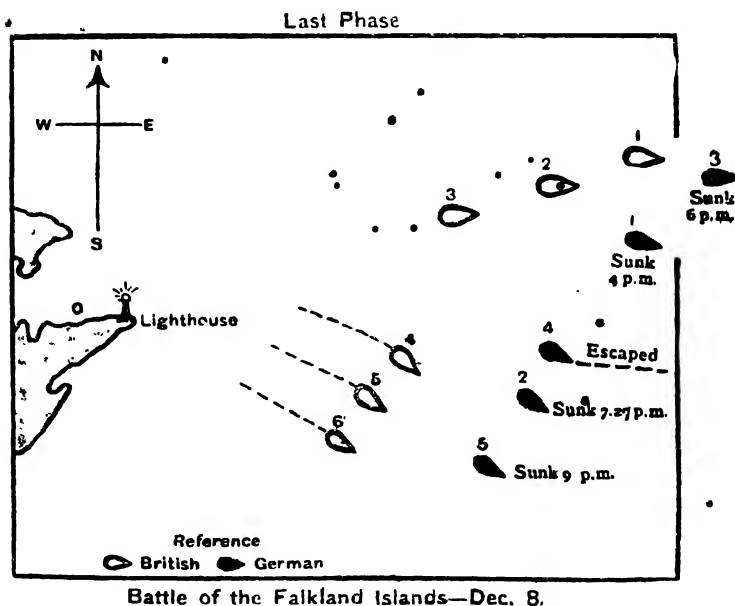
the *Inflexible*, and the *Carnarvon* engaged the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau*. About 2 o'clock our battle cruisers had the range of the German flagship, and a terrific artillery duel began. The smoke was getting in our way, and Admiral Sturdee used his superior speed to get to the other side of the enemy. We simply pounded the *Scharnhorst* to pieces, and just after 4 o'clock

she listed to port and then turned bottom upwards with her propeller still going round. The battle cruisers and the *Carnarvon* then concentrated on the *Gneisenau*, which was sheering off to the south-east, and at 6 o'clock she too listed and went under.

Meanwhile the *Kent*, *Glasgow*, and *Cornwall* were hot in pursuit of the three light cruisers, and here was a more equally matched battle. The *Dresden*, which was farthest to the east, managed to escape. The other two had slightly the advantage of speed of the British ships, but our engineers and stokers worked magnificently, and managed to get 25 knots out of the *Kent*. It was now a thick misty day, with a drizzle of rain, and each duel had consequently the air of a separate battle. The news of the sinking of the *Scharnhorst* and the *Gneisenau* put new spirit into our men, and at 7.27 p.m. the *Nürnberg*, which had been set on fire by the *Kent*, went down with her guns still firing. The *Leipzig*, which had to face the *Glasgow* and the *Cornwall*, kept afloat till 9 p.m., when she too heeled over and sank. As the wet night closed in the battle died away. Only the *Dresden*, battered and fleeing far out in the southern waters, remained of the proud squadron which at dawn had sailed to what it believed to be an easy victory. The defeat of Cradock in the murky sunset off Coronel had been amply avenged.

The Battle of the Falkland Islands was a brilliant piece of strategy, for a plan, initiated more than a month before and involving a journey

across the world, was executed with complete secrecy and precision. The honours must be divided between Sir Frederick Sturdee and the Admiralty at home, which conceived the enterprise. Technically, the sole blemish was the escape of the *Dresden*, which could scarcely have



been prevented, for the *Carnarvon*, owing to her inadequate speed, could not join her sister ships in the pursuit of the lighter German vessels, and the *Glasgow*, the only ship which might have overhauled her, was busy with the *Leipzig*. The fight had a vital bearing on the position of Germany. It annihilated the one squadron left to her outside the North Sea, and it removed a

formidable menace to our trade routes. After the 8th of December, the *Dresden* \* and the *Karlsruhe* were the sole enemy cruisers left at large, for the *Bremen*, never very fortunate in her efforts, seemed to have temporarily disappeared. These, with the armoured merchantmen, the *Kronprinz.Wilhelm* and the *Prince Eitel Friedrich*, were the only privateers still at work on the High Seas.

The British losses were small considering the magnitude of the victory. The *Invincible* was hit by eighteen shells, but had no casualties. The *Inflexible* was hit thrice, and had one man killed. The cruisers suffered more heavily, the *Kent*, for example, having four men killed and twelve wounded, and the *Glasgow* nine killed and four wounded. Unlike the Germans at Coronel, every effort was made by our ships to save life. The only sign of a lost vessel was at first the slightly discoloured water. Then the wreckage floated up with men clinging to it, and boats were lowered, and sailors let down the sides on bow-lines to try to rescue the survivors who floated past. The water was icy cold—about 40 degrees—and presently many of the swimmers grew numb and went under. , Albatrosses, too, attacked some of those clinging to the wreckage, pecking at their eyes and forcing them to let go. Altogether we must have saved a couple of hundred men, in-

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\* The *Dresden* was caught off Juan Fernandez on March 14, 1915, by the *Kent* and the *Glasgow*, and sunk in five minutes. There is good reason to believe that the *Karlsruhe* was wrecked in the West Indies during the autumn of 1914.

cluding the captain of the *Gneisenau*. Admiral von Spee went down, with two of his sons.

From a graphic description \* of the action by an officer of the *Kent*, Commander Eric Wharton, we take this extract :—

“ It is near dusk now, 7.30, and we have been two hours in action. Up comes everyone from below, from casemates and turrets, to stare and rejoice, but they are all immediately hustled away to do what can be done to save life. All our boats are riddled, and none of them can be repaired for an hour. We do what we can with lifebuoys and lumps of wood paid astern, but it's mighty little ; it's a lippy sea, and dreadfully cold. All this part was beastly. There were so many of them in sight, and we could do so little till our boats were patched. At last we could lower one cutter and the galley, and even then life-saving was no easy job. I was in the galley, and plunged about for twenty minutes to get one man. Altogether we got on board about a dozen, five of whom were really ‘ goners ’ when we hoisted them on board. The other seven have flourished and are really quite normal again now. Early in these life-saving operations the *Nürnberg* heeled over on her side and sank. They were a brave lot ; one man stood aft and held the ensign flying in his hands till the ship went under. It was strange and weird, all this aftermath, the wind rapidly arising from the westward, darkness closing in, one ship heaving to the swell well battered, the foretop-gallant-mast gone. Of the other, nothing to be seen but floating wreckage, with here and there a man clinging, and the ‘ Mollyhawks ’ (vultures of the sea) swooping by. The wind moaned, and death was on the air. Then, see ! out of the mist loomed a great four-masted barque under full canvas. A great ghost-ship she seemed. Slowly, majestically she sailed by and vanished in the night.”

Let us do honour to a gallant enemy. The German admiral fought as Cradock had, fought,



## 74 The British Navy during the War [1914

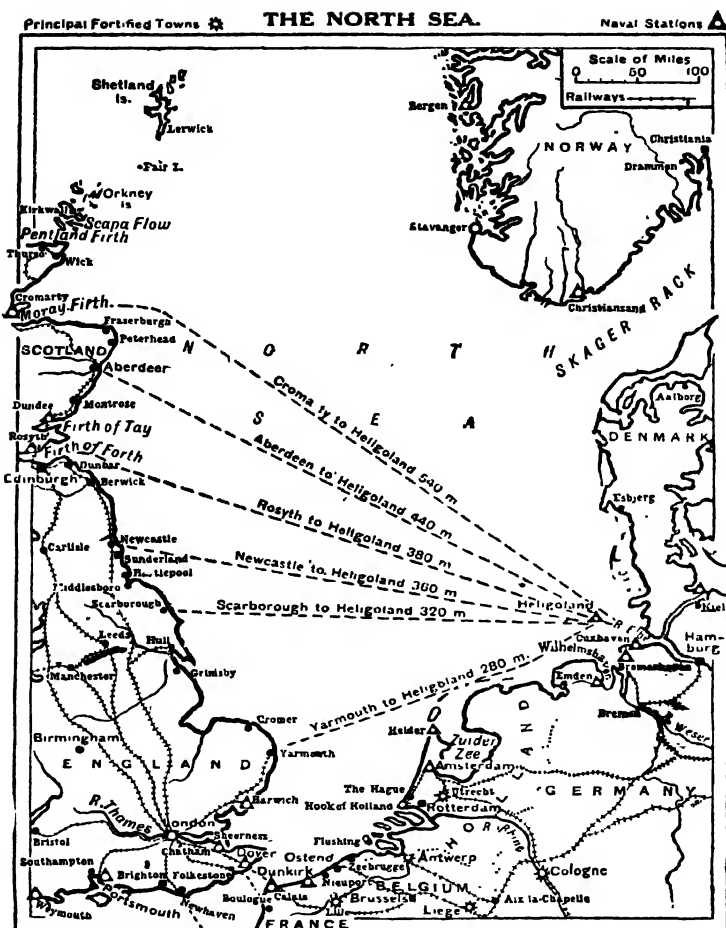
the German sailors died as Cradock's men had died, and there can be no higher praise. They went down with colours flying, and at the last the men seem to have lined up on the decks of the doomed ships. They continued to resist after their vessels had become shambles. One captured officer reported that before the end his ship had no upper deck left, every man there having been killed, and one turret blown bodily overboard by a 12-inch lyddite shell. But in all this hell of slaughter, which lasted for half a day, there was never a thought of surrender. Von Spee and Cradock lie beneath the same waters, in the final concord of those who have looked unshaken upon death.

## CHAPTER IV

## RAIDS AND BLOCKADES

TOWARDS the end of 1914 the war in northern waters entered upon a singular phase which has no parallel in the conflicts of the past. An old dread took bodily form, and its embodiment proved farcical. Exasperated by failure, Germany cast from her all the ancient etiquette of war, and the result was that the law of the sea had to be largely rewritten.

The shores of Britain since the days of Paul Jones had been immune from serious hostile attentions. Very properly we regarded our Navy as our defence, and paid little heed to coast fortifications, except at important naval stations such as Portsmouth and Dover. But the possibility of invasion remained in the popular mind, and was used as a goad to stir us to activity in our spasmodic fits of national stocktaking. Invasion on the grand scale was admittedly out of the question so long as our fleets held the sea ; but a raid in the fog of a winter's night was conceivable, and became a favourite theme of romancers and propagandists. When the war broke out the menace was seriously regarded by the Government, and during October and November, when the German guns across the Channel were almost within hearing of our southern ports, steps were



British East Coast, showing distances from German Base.

taken to protect our eastern coast-line. We needed every atom of our strength for the great Flanders struggle, and if a raiding party succeeded in occupying a stretch of shore, the necessity of dislodging him might gravely handicap our major strategy. Accordingly Yeomanry and Territorials entrenched themselves in the Eastern counties, and had the dullness of their days enlivened by many rumours. Civilians, remembering the awful warning of a recent popular drama, were perturbed by the thought of how they should conduct themselves if their homes were violated, and there was much activity in the formation of national guards, and a considerable increase in recruiting for the new service armies.

Late on the afternoon of 2nd November, eight German warships sailed from the Elbe base. They were three battle cruisers, the *Seydlitz*, the *Moltke*, and the *Von der Tann*; two armoured cruisers, the *Bluecher* and the *Yorck*; and three light cruisers, the *Kolberg*, the *Graudenz*, and the *Strassburg*. Except the *Yorck*, they were fast vessels, making at least 25 knots, and the battle cruisers carried 11-inch guns. They constituted the most powerful German force that had yet put to sea. Cleared for action, they started for the coast of England, and early in the winter dawn ran through the nets of a British fishing fleet eight miles east of Lowestoft. An old coast police boat, the *Halcyon*, was next sighted, and received a few shots, but the Germans had no time to waste on her. About eight o'clock they were opposite Yarmouth, and proceeded to bom-

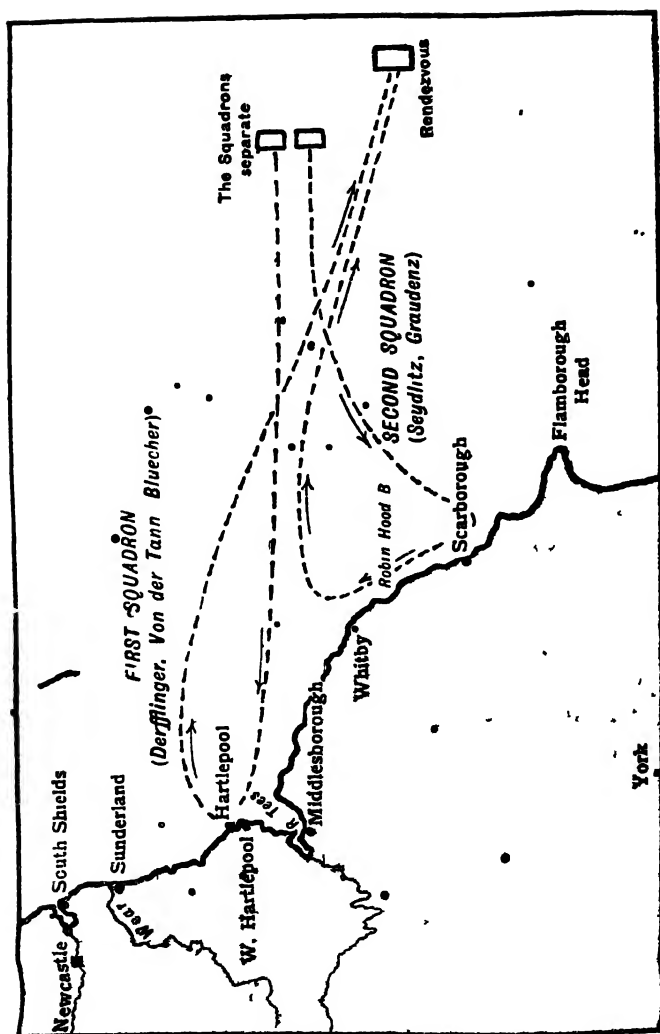
bard the wireless station and the naval air station from a distance of about ten miles. For some reason still unknown they were afraid to venture farther inshore—probably they took their range from a line of buoys marked on the chart, and did not know that after the declaration of war these buoys had been moved 500 yards farther out to sea—so their shells only ploughed the sands and plumped in the water. In a quarter of an hour they grew tired of it, and moved away, dropping many floating mines, which later in the day caused the loss of one of our submarines and two fishing-boats. The enterprise was unlucky, for on the road back the *York* struck a mine and went to the bottom with most of her crew.

The raid was a reconnaissance, and a blow aimed at the *sang-froid* of Britain. The latter purpose miscarried, for nobody in Britain gave it a second thought. To bombard the beach front of a watering-place seemed a paltry achievement. It would have been wiser had the authorities taken it more seriously, and issued instructions to civilians as to what to do in case of a repetition of such attempts. For, having found the way, the invaders were certain to return.

They came again on 16th December, when a thick, cold mist lay low on our Eastern coasts. Von Spee and his squadron had gone to their death at the Falkland Islands, and Germany was fired with a passion of revenge. Espionage had been rampant, for somehow she seemed to have learned not only the navigation of the York-

shire coast and the topography of the coast towns, but the way through the British mine-fields and our own naval dispositions at the moment. The composition of the raiding force, which was under Rear-Admiral Funke, the second in command of the battle-cruiser squadron, is not yet clear ; but it is almost certain that it included the *Derfflinger*, the newest of the battle cruisers, and the *Von der Tann*. The *Bluecher* was there beyond doubt, and the other two may have been the *Seydlitz* and the *Graudenz*. There were also at least two light cruisers present. Before daybreak on the 16th the squadron arrived off the mouth of the Tees, and there divided its forces. The *Derfflinger*, the *Von der Tann*, and probably the *Bluecher*, went north to raid the Hartlepoons, and the other two went south against Scarborough.

A few minutes before eight o'clock those citizens of Scarborough who were out of bed saw approaching from the north four strange ships. It was a still morning, with what is called in Scotland, a *haar* on the water, and something of a sea running, for the last days had been stormy. Scarborough was entirely without defences, except an old Russian 60-pounder, a Crimean relic, which was as useful as the flint arrowheads in the local museum. It had once been a garrison artillery depot, and had a battery below the Castle, but Lord Haldane had altered this and made it a cavalry station. Some troops of the new service battalions were quartered in the place, and there was a wireless station behind the town. Otherwise it was an open seaside resort, as defenceless against



Raid on Scarborough and Hartlepool.

an attack from the sea as a seal against a killer-whale.

The ships poured shells into the coastguard station and the Castle grounds, where they seemed to suspect the presence of hostile batteries. Then they steamed in front of the town, approaching to some five hundred yards from the shore. Here they proceeded to a systematic bombardment, aiming at every large object within sight, including the Grand Hotel and the gasworks, while many shells were directed towards the waterworks and the wireless station in the western suburbs. Churches, public buildings, and hospitals were hit, and large areas of private houses were wrecked. For forty minutes the bombardment continued, and it is calculated that five hundred shells were fired. Midway in their course the ships swung round and began to move northwards again, while the light cruisers went out to sea and began the work of mine-dropping. The streets were crowded with puzzled and scared inhabitants, for they had no instructions what to do, and; as in every watering-place, there was a large proportion of old people, women, and invalids. At a quarter to nine all was over, and the hulls of the invaders were disappearing round the Castle promontory. They left behind them eighteen dead, mostly women and children, and about seventy wounded.

About nine o'clock the coastguard at Whitby, the little town on the cliffs north of Scarborough, saw two great ships steaming up fast from the south. Ten minutes later the newcomers opened



fire on the signal station on the cliff-head. Several dozen shells were fired in a few minutes, many striking the cliff, and others going too high and falling behind the railway station. Some actually went four miles inland, and awakened a sleepy little village. The old Abbey of Hilda and Caedmon was struck but not seriously damaged; and on the whole, considering the number of shells it received, Whitby suffered little. The casualties were only five, three killed and two wounded. The invaders turned north-eastward and disappeared into the haze, to join their other division.

That other division had visited the Hartlepoons, the only town of the three which came near to fulfilling the definition of a fortified place. It had a small fort, with a battery of small, antiquated guns. It had important docks and large ship-building works, which were busy at the time on Government orders, and some companies of the ~~new~~ service battalions were billeted in the town. Off the shore was lying a small British flotilla—a gunboat, the *Patrol*, carrying 4-inch guns, and two destroyers, the *Doon* and the *Hardy*.

About the same time as the bombardment of Scarborough began, the *Derfflinger*, the *Von der Tann*, and the *Blücher* came out of the mist upon the British flotilla and opened fire. The action took place on the north side of the peninsula on which Old Hartlepool stands. With great gallantry the small British craft tried to close and torpedo the invaders, but they were driven back with half a dozen killed and twenty-five wounded, and their

only course was flight. The German ships approached the shore and fired on the battery.

Then began the first fight on English soil with a foreign foe since the French landed in Sussex in 1690—the first on British soil since the fight at Fishguard in 1797. The achievement deserves to be remembered. The battery was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Robson, a Territorial officer, and consisted of some Territorials of the Durham Royal Garrison Artillery and some infantry of the Durhams. The 12-inch shells of the *Derfflinger* burst in and around the battery, but the men stood to their out-classed guns without wavering, and aimed with some success at the upper decks of the invaders. For more than half an hour a furious cannonade continued, in which some 1,500 shells seem to have been fired. One ship kept close to the battery, and gave it broadside after broadside ; the other two moved farther north, and shelled Old Hartlepool, and fired over the peninsula at West Hartlepool and the docks. The streets of the old town suffered terribly, the gasworks were destroyed, and one of the big shipbuilding yards damaged, but the docks and the other yards were not touched. Churches, hospitals, workhouses, and schools were all struck. Little children going to school and babies in their mothers' arms were killed. The total death-roll was 119, and the wounded over 300 ; six hundred houses were damaged or destroyed, and three steamers that night struck the mines which the invaders had laid off the shore, and went down with much loss of life.

The spirit in which the inhabitants of the raided towns met the crisis was worthy of the highest praise. There was dire confusion—for nobody had been told what to do; there was some panic—it would have been a miracle if there had not been; but on the whole the situation was met with admirable coolness and courage. The authorities, as soon as the last shots were fired, turned to the work of relief; the Territorials in Hartlepool behaving like veterans both during and after the bombardment; the girls in the Hartlepool Telephone Exchange worked steadily through the cannonade; and there were many instances of heroism on the part of the children who suffered so terribly. It should be remembered that we cannot compare this attack on the East Coast towns with the assaults in a land war on some city in the battle front. In the latter case the mind of the inhabitants has been attuned for weeks to danger, and preparations have been made for defence. But here the bolt came from the blue, the narrow, crowded streets of Old Hartlepool were a death-trap, and the ordinary citizen was plunged in a second from profound peace into the midst of a nerve-racking and unexpected war.

Somewhere between nine and ten on that December morning the German vessels rendezvoused and started on their homeward course. They escaped only by the skin of their teeth. Before the first shell was fired word of the attempt had reached the British Grand Fleet. Somewhere out in the *haar* two battle-cruiser squadrons were

moving to intercept the raiders, and behind came half a dozen of the great battleships. But for an accident of weather the German battle-cruiser squadron would have gone to the bottom of the North Sea. But the morning *haar* thickened, till a series of blind fog-belts stretched for a hundred miles east from our shores. No dispatch has yet told the tale of that lamentable miscarriage, which was due solely to the weather, and not to any lack of skill and enterprise on the part of our admirals. Our Second Battle-Cruiser Squadron actually came within view of the enemy at a distance of eight miles, and the sight of it deflected the German course. Then, just as the trap seemed about to close, the fog thickened, speed had to be reduced, and Admiral Funke slipped through. There is reason to believe that in the flight the *Von der Tann* rammed one of the light cruisers and damaged her own bows. With this slight misadventure the raiders returned safely to the Heligoland base, to be welcomed with Iron Crosses and newspaper eulogies on this new proof of German valour.

On that same day the Admiralty issued a message pointing out that "demonstrations of this character against unfortified towns or commercial ports, though not difficult to accomplish provided that a certain amount of risk is accepted, are devoid of military significance." "They must not," it was added, "be allowed to modify the general naval policy which is being pursued." The first, perhaps, was a pardonable over-statement, unless we interpret the word "military"

in a narrow sense. These raids had a very serious military and naval purpose, which it is well to recognize. The German aim was to create such a panic in civilian England as would prevent the dispatch of the new armies to the Continent, and to compel Sir John Jellicoe and the Grand Fleet to move his base nearer the East Coast, and undertake the duties of coast protection. The first was defeated by the excellent spirit with which England accepted the disaster. No voice was raised to clamour for the use of the new armies as a garrison for our seaboard. The second, though at first there was some natural indignation on the threatened coast and a few foolish speeches and newspaper articles, had no chance of succeeding. In vain is the net spread in sight of the bird. The only result was that more stringent measures were taken to prevent espionage, that civilians were at last given some simple emergency directions, and that recruiting received the best possible advertisement.

Germany made much of the exploit, till she discovered that neutral nations, especially America, were seriously scandalized, and then she took to lame explanations. Scarborough had been bombarded because it had a wireless station, Whitby because it had a naval signal station, Hartlepool because it had a little fort. The defence was one of those curious quibbles in which Germany delights. Technically she could make out a sort of case, and Hartlepool might fairly be said to have come within the category of a defended place. It is true that the fortifications were lamentably

inadequate, but she might retort that was our business, not hers. But the real answer is that she did not aim at the destruction of military and naval accessories, except as an afterthought. The sea-front of Scarborough and streets of Old Hartlepool were bombarded not because they were in the line of fire against a fort or a wireless station, but for their own sakes—because they contained a multitude of people who could be killed or terrorized. German espionage is wonderful and German information good. If Germany had the exact plans of the coast ports and of their condition at the time, as she certainly had, she knew very well how far they were from being fortified towns or military and naval bases. She selected them just because they were open towns, for “frightfulness” there would have far greater moral effects upon the nation than if it had been directed against Harwich or Dover, where it might be regarded as one of the natural risks of war. Her performance was a breach not of a technicality but of the unwritten conventions of honourable campaigning.\* The slaughter of

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\* “Military proceedings are not regulated solely by the stipulations of international law. There are other factors—conscience, good sense. A sense of the duties which the principles of humanity impose will be the surest guide for the conduct of seamen, and will constitute the most effectual safeguard against abuse. The officers of the German Navy—I say it with emphasis—will always fulfil in the strictest manner duties which flow from the unwritten law of humanity and civilization.”—Baron Marschall von Bieberstein at the Hague Conference, 1907.

civilians to produce an impression is one of those things repellent to any man trained in the etiquette of a great service. The German navy has been justly admired, but it was beginning to show its parvenu origin. Individual sailors might conduct themselves like gentlemen, but there was no binding tradition of gentility in the service, and, as in the army, those at the head disliked and repudiated any such weakness. The last word is with the Mayor of Scarborough. "Some newcomers," he wrote, "into honourable professions learn the tricks before the traditions."

The British casualties by sea, apart from the losses in battle which have been described in an earlier chapter, were not serious during the last two months of the year, but on the first day of 1915 there was a grave misfortune. On the 31st of December eight vessels of the Channel Fleet left Sheerness, and about three o'clock on the morning of 1st January, in bright moonlight, the eight were steering in single line at a moderate speed near the Start Lighthouse. There seems to have been no screen of destroyers, and the situation invited an attack from submarines, several of which had been reported in these waters. The last of the line was the *Formidable*, Captain Loxley, a pre-Dreadnought of 15,000 tons, and a sister ship to the *Bulwark*, which had been blown up at Sheerness on 26th November. Some time after three she was struck by two torpedoes, and went down. Four boats were launched, one of which capsized, and out of a crew of some 800, only 201

were saved. Captain Loxley, one of the ablest of our younger sailors, went down with his ship. The rescue of part of the crew was due to the courage and good seamanship of Captain William Pillar, of the Brixham trawler *Providence*, who in heavy weather managed to take the inmates of the *Formidable's* cutter aboard his vessel. For this fine performance he was given a commission in the Royal Navy, and decorated by the King, who, speaking as a sailor, said: "I realize how difficult your task must have been, because I know myself how arduous it is to gybe a vessel in a heavy gale." The misfortune showed that the lesson of the loss of the *Cressy*, *Hogue*, and *Aboukir* had been imperfectly learned. For eight battleships to move slowly in line on a moonlit night in submarine-infested waters without destroyers was simply to court destruction.

Early on the morning of Sunday, 24th January, 1915, Rear-Admiral Hipper, who commanded the German Battle-Cruiser Squadron, left Wilhelms-haven with a strong force to repeat the exploits of Admiral Funke. The *Von der Tann* was still undergoing repairs, but he had with him the *Seydlitz*, in which he flew his flag, the *Moltke*, the *Derfflinger*, the *Bluecher*, six light cruisers, one of which was the *Kolberg*, and a destroyer flotilla. To recapitulate their strengths: the *Derfflinger* had 26,200 tons, a speed of nearly 27 knots, an armour belt of 12 inches, and eight 12-inch guns; the *Seydlitz* had 24,600 tons, the same speed, and ten 11-inch guns; the *Moltke* had 22,640 tons, 25 knots, and ten 11-inch guns; the *Bluecher* had



15,550 tons, 24 knots, and twelve 8.2-inch guns. Before starting Admiral Hipper took certain precautions. He enlarged the mine-field north of Heligoland, and north of it concentrated a submarine flotilla, while he arranged for Zeppelins and seaplanes to come out from the island in certain contingencies. It is impossible to dogmatize as to the purpose of his movements. It has been suggested that he hoped to get one or more of his battle cruisers round the north end of Scotland to attack the sea highroads of British commerce. He may have intended a new raid on our eastern coasts—the Tyne, perhaps, or the Forth. But, judging from his preparations and his subsequent tactics, it is likely that his main motive, assuming that he encountered part of the British fleet, was to retire and fight a running action, and entice our vessels within reach of his submarines or the Heligoland mine-field.

~~The~~ The same morning the British Battle-Cruiser Squadron, under Vice-Admiral Sir David Beatty, put to sea. Probably some hint of the German preparations had reached the Admiralty, and developments were anticipated. He flew his flag in the *Lion*—Captain A. S. M. Chatfield—a vessel of 26,350 tons, nearly 29 knots, and an armament of eight 13.5-inch guns. With him sailed five other battle cruisers: the *Tiger*—Captain Henry Pelly—28,000 tons, 28 knots, eight 13.5 inch guns; the *Princess Royal*—Captain Osmond Brock—a sister ship of the *Lion*; the *New Zealand*—Captain Lionel Halsey—18,800 tons, 25 knots, and eight 12-inch guns; the *Indomitable*—Captain Francis

Kennedy—a sister ship of the *Invincible* and *Inflexible*, which were in the battle of the Falkland Islands. With the battle cruisers went four cruisers of the “town” class—the *Southampton*, the *Nottingham*, the *Birmingham*, and the *Lowestoft*; three light cruisers—the *Arethusa*, the *Aurora*, and the *Undaunted*—and destroyer flotillas, under Commander Reginald Y. Tyrwhitt. Admiral Beatty's squadron completely outclassed Admiral Hipper's both in numbers, pace, and weight of fire, and the Germans were heavily handicapped by the presence of the *Bluecher*, whose low speed of only 24 knots marked her out as a predestined prey.

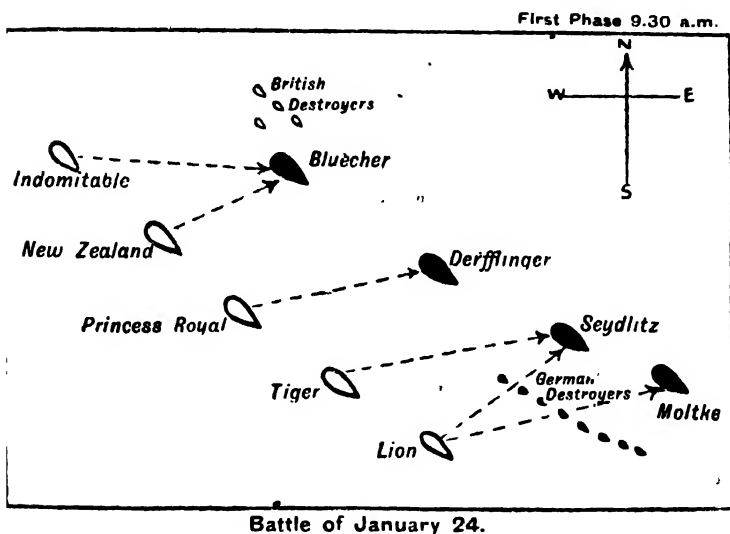
The night of Saturday, the 23rd, had been foggy, and the destroyers, scouting east of the Dogger Bank, had a difficult time. Sunday morning, however, dawned clear and sharp, for the wind had changed to the north-east, and swept the mist from the seas. About seven o'clock the *Aurora*, Captain Wilmot Nicholson, sighted the Germans off the Dogger Bank, signalled the news to Admiral Beatty, and presently opened fire. Admiral Beatty steered to the direction of the flashes, and Admiral Hipper, who had been moving north-west, promptly turned round and took a course to the south-east. This sudden flight, when he could not have been informed of the enemy's strength, suggests that the German admiral's main purpose was to lure our vessels to the dangerous Heligoland area.

About eight o'clock the situation was as follows: the Germans were moving south-east

in line, with the *Moltke* leading, followed by the *Seydlitz*, *Derfflinger*, and *Bluecher*, with the destroyers on their starboard beam, and the light cruisers ahead. Close upon them were the British destroyers and light cruisers, who presently crossed on the port side to prevent their smoke from spoiling the marksmanship of the larger vessels. Our battle cruisers did not follow directly behind, but, in order to avoid the mines which the enemy was certain to drop, kept on a parallel course to the westward. The *Lion* led, followed by the *Tiger*, the *Princess Royal*, the *New Zealand*, and the *Indomitable*. What followed was an extraordinary tribute to the engineers. The first three ships could easily be worked up to 30 knots, but the last two, which had normally only 25 knots, were so strenuously driven that they managed to keep in line. Our leading ships had the pace of the Germans, and no one of our squadron was seriously outclassed, while the unfortunate *Bluecher*, on the other hand, was bound to drop behind.

Fourteen miles at first separated us from the enemy, and by nine o'clock we were within  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the last ship. The *Lion* fired a ranging shot which fell short, but soon after nine, when the squadrons were ten miles apart, she got her first blow home on the *Bluecher*. As our line began to draw level the *Tiger* continued to attack the *Bluecher*, while the *Lion* attended to the *Derfflinger*. At 9.30 the *Bluecher* had fallen so much astern that she came within range of the guns of the *New Zealand*, and the *Lion* and the *Tiger*

were busy with the leading German ship, the *Seydlitz*, while the *Princess Royal* attacked the *Derfflinger*. The *Moltke*, first in the line, seems to have got off lightly, because of the smoke which obscured the range. Our destroyers and light cruisers had dropped behind, but presently, when the German destroyers threatened, the *Metcor*



and "M" division, under Captain the Hon. Herbert Meade, went ahead and took up a position of great danger in the very thick of the firing.

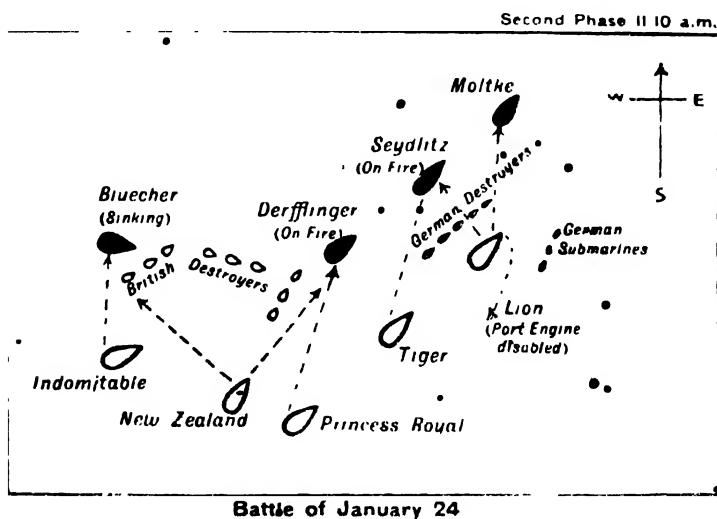
The British gunnery was precise, shell after shell hitting a pin-point ten miles off—a pin-point, too, moving at over thirty miles an hour. It was not a broadside action, for the ships at which we aimed were stern-on. At first sight this looks like a disadvantage, but in practice

it has been found to give the best results, and that for a simple reason. To get the line is an easy matter; the difficulty is to get the right elevation. In a broadside action a shell which is too high falls harmlessly beyond the vessel, because the target is only the narrow width of the deck. But in a stern-on fight the target is the whole length of the vessel, 600 feet and more, instead of 90.

By eleven o'clock the *Seydlitz* and the *Derfflinger* were on fire. The *Bluecher* had fallen behind in flames, and was being battered by the *New Zealand* and the *Indomitable*. An hour later the *Meteor* torpedoed her, and she began to sink. The crew lined up on deck, ready for death, and it was only the shouts of the *Arethusa* that made them jump into the water. With a cheer they went overboard, and none too soon, for presently the *Bluecher* turned turtle and floated bottom upwards. Our boats rescued over 120 of the swimmers, and would have saved more had not some German aircraft from Heligoland dropped bombs upon the rescue parties and killed several German sailors. The airmen clearly thought that the *Bluecher* was a sinking British cruiser, and this may have been the basis of the preposterous tale of our losses which the German Admiralty subsequently published.

We must return to the doings of the three leading battle cruisers. The German destroyers managed to get between them and the enemy, and under cover of their smoke the Germans made a half turn to the north, and increased the distance.

Admiral Beatty promptly altered his course to conform. The destroyers then attacked us at close quarters, hoping to torpedo, but the 4-inch guns amidships on the battle cruisers drove them off. Presently submarines were sighted, and Admiral Beatty himself saw a periscope on the starboard bow of the *Lion*. The flagship at this



time was much under fire, but suffered remarkably little damage. At three minutes past eleven, however, as her bow lifted from the water it was struck by a shell which damaged the feed tank. She had to reduce her speed, and fell out of the line.

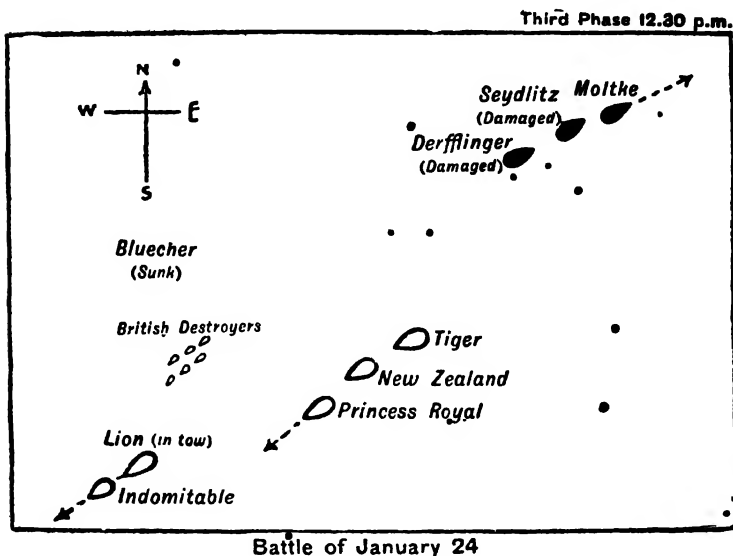
This accident had unfortunate effects on the battle, which up to now had been going strongly in the British favour. Admiral Beatty had to

transfer his flag to the destroyer *Attack*, and the charge of the pursuing battle cruisers passed to the next senior officer, Rear-Admiral Moore, whose flag flew in the *New Zealand*. The *Lion* moved away to the north-west, and in the afternoon her engines began to give serious trouble. The *Indomitable*, released by the sinking of the *Bluecher*, took her in tow, and after some anxious hours she was brought safely into an English port.

The *Attack* followed hard on the battle cruisers, but it was not till twenty minutes past twelve that she overtook the *Princess Royal*, to which Admiral Beatty transferred his flag. He found that the squadron had broken off the fight and were retiring. The reasons which led Admiral Moore to this step have not yet been given to the world. According to the German report, which there is no cause to distrust, the British squadron at the moment of turning was seventy miles from Heligoland, and probably at least forty from the new mine-field which Admiral Hipper had laid. Admiral Moore had to make a momentous and most difficult decision, and any verdict upon its wisdom would be premature. The consequence was that what might have been a crushing victory was changed to a disappointment. The British losses were few—ten men killed on the *Tiger*, four on the *Meteor*, and six wounded on the *Lion*; no British vessel was lost, and the hurt to the flagship was soon repaired. The Germans lost the *Bluecher*; the *Derfflinger* and the *Seydlitz* were seriously damaged, and many of their crews must have

perished. But minor successes seem almost a failure when we were within an ace of destroying the whole German force of battle cruisers.

To Germany the result was a grave annoyance, which was covered by a cloud of inaccurate reports. Admiral Hipper was apparently not



held responsible, but Admiral von Ingenohl, for some reason, still obscure, was the target of criticism. He was shortly afterwards removed from the command of the High Sea Fleet, and his place taken by Admiral von Pöhl.

Three weeks later the British First Lord of the Admiralty made a statement in the House of Commons which summed up the work of the navy, and drew the attention of the nation to the lesson



## 98 The British Navy during the War [1915]

of the North Sea action—the power of the great guns, the excellence of British gunnery, the immense advantage of speed. From a speech of extraordinary interest we take one quotation:—

“ The great merit of Admiral Sir David Beatty’s action is that it shows us and the world that there is at present no reason to assume that ship for ship, gun for gun, and man for man we cannot give a very good account of ourselves. It shows that at five to four in representative ships—because the quality of the ships on either side is a very fair representation of the relative qualities of the lines of battle—the Germans do not think it prudent to engage, that they accepted without doubt or hesitation their inferiority, that they thought only of flight as our men thought only of pursuit, and that they were wise in the view they took, and that if they had taken any other view they would unquestionably have been destroyed. That is the cruel fact, and no falsehood—and many have been issued—no endeavour to sink by official *communiqués* vessels they could not stay to sink in war—will obscure that cruel fact. When, if ever, the great fleet sets out for the general battle, we shall hope to bring into the line a preponderance not only in quality, but in numbers, which will not be five to four, but will be something considerably greater than that. Therefore we may consider this extra margin as an additional insurance against unexpected losses by mine and submarine, such as may at any moment occur in the preliminaries of a great sea battle. It is for these important reasons of test and trial that we must regard this action of the Dogger Bank as an important, and I think I may say satisfactory, event. The losses of the navy, although small compared to the sacrifices of the army, have been heavy. We have lost, mainly by submarines, the lives of 5,500 officers and men, and we have killed, mainly by gun fire, an equal number, which is, of course, a much larger proportion of the German forces engaged. We have also taken in sea fighting 82 officers and 934 men prisoners of war. No British naval prisoners of war have been taken in

fighting at sea by the Germans. When they had the inclination they had not the opportunity, and when they had the opportunity they had not the inclination. For the loss of these British lives we have lived through six months of this war safely and even prosperously. We have established for the time being a command of the sea such as we had never expected, such as we have never known, and such as our ancestors have never known at any other period of our history."

In the concluding words of his speech Mr. Churchill adumbrated the possibility of further naval pressure against an enemy "which, as a matter of deliberate policy, places herself outside all international obligations." He referred especially to the imports of food, hitherto unhindered, and his prognostication was soon verified.

From the beginning of the struggle merchandise which was not contraband of war had been allowed to pass into Germany in neutral vessels. But on the 26th of January the German Government announced their intention of seizing all stocks of corn and flour, and forbade all private transactions as from that morning. This meant that grain had become a munition of war, for it was no longer possible to distinguish between imports for the civilian population and for the army in the field. Accordingly the British Government had to revise its practice. The American steamer *Wilhelmina*, laden with a cargo of food-stuffs for Germany, was stopped at Falmouth, and the case referred to the Prize Courts. In this policy Britain did not depart from the traditional principles of international practice. She did not propose to seize non-contraband goods in neutral vessels. All

that happened was that certain goods, which are normally non-contraband, were now made contraband by the action of Germany.

The economic and legal bearing of these events does not concern us here; it is sufficient to note the actual consequences. Germany, much perturbed by the unforeseen results of her declaration, attempted to modify it by announcing that imports of food would not be used for military purposes; but such a declaration could not be accepted by Britain, for it was not possible in practice. Then in a fit of fury Germany took the bold step of declaring war against all British merchandise—war which would follow none of the old rules, for it would be conducted by submarines, who had no facilities, even if they had the disposition, to rescue the crews. She further announced that from 18th February onward the waters around the British Isles would be considered a war region, and that any enemy merchant vessels found there “would be destroyed without its always being possible to warn the crew or passengers of the dangers threatening.” The sea passage north of the Shetlands and the coastal waters of the Netherlands were declared to be exempt from this menace.

The “blockade” of Britain was not really a blockade in any technical sense. Germany merely specified certain tracts of water in which she proposed to commit acts which were forbidden by every code of naval warfare. In 1806 Napoleon had issued an earlier Berlin Decree, in which he proclaimed the British Isles to be in a state of

blockade. He could not enforce it, and British trade, so far from suffering, actually increased in the ensuing years. But Napoleon, though he used the word "blockade" improperly, sought his purpose by means which were not repugnant to the ethics of civilized war. Germany, utterly incapable of a real blockade, could only succeed by jettisoning her last remnants of decency. An inferior boxer may get an advantage over a strong opponent if he gouges out his eyes.

The German announcement not unnaturally gave serious concern to neutral nations, especially to America. Germany had warned them that neutral ships might perish in the general holocaust and their anxiety was increased by an incident which happened on 6th February. The Cunarder *Lusitania*, which had a number of Americans on board, arrived at Liverpool flying the American flag. Such a use in emergencies is a recognized practice of war—one of Paul Jones's lieutenants passed successfully through the British Channel Fleet by hoisting British colours—and the British Foreign Office was justified in defending the custom. But clearly if it was made habitual it would greatly increase the risks of neutrals, and America had some grounds for her request that it should not be used "frequently and deliberately."

The next step of the British Government was to close absolutely to all ships of all nations the greater part of the North Channel leading from the Atlantic to the Irish Sea. Then on 1st March Mr. Asquith announced in the House of Commons

that the Allies held themselves free to detain, and take into port all ships carrying goods of presumed enemy origin, ownership, or destination. No neutral vessel which sailed from a German port after 1st March would be allowed to proceed, and no vessel after that date would be suffered to sail to any German port. It was not proposed to confiscate such vessels or their contents; but they would be detained. Such an announcement implied the strict blockade of Germany, and was defended by Mr. Asquith not as a fulfilment of, but as a departure from, international law upon the subject. It was, in his view, a legitimate retaliation against a foe which had broken not only every international rule but every moral obligation. Clearly it could not be an "effective" blockade in the strictest sense, and this we shall consider later. But here it may be noted that it was at least as effective, as ~~the~~ blockade proclaimed by the North in the American Civil War, when a highly-indented coast-line of 3,000 miles was watched by only twelve ships.

Before 18th February, the day of destiny, German submarines had been busy against our merchantmen. They had succeeded from the beginning of the year in sinking eight, and they had been wholly unscrupulous in their proceedings, as was proved by the attack off Havre upon the hospital ship *Asturias*. By 24th February they had sunk seven more, by 10th March another four, by 17th March another eight, by 24th March another three, by 31st March another three. If

we take the total arrivals and sailings of oversea steamers of all nationalities above 300 tons to and from ports in the United Kingdom during that period, we shall find that the losses work out at about three per thousand. It was not a brilliant achievement. The mountain which had been in travail with awesome possibilities brought forth an inconsiderable mouse. The "blockade" hindered the sailing of scarcely a British ship. It did not raise the price of any necessary by a farthing. But it effectively ruined what was left of Germany's reputation in the eyes of the civilized world, and it increased, if increase were needed, the determination of the Allies to make an end of this crazy international anarchism. Some of the commanders of the German submarines—notably Captain von Weddigen, who lost his life—went about the business as decently as their orders allowed. Others, such as the miscreant who sank the *Falaba*, torpedoed the vessel before the passengers were in the boats, and jeered at the drowning. In the German navy, as in the German army, humanity depended upon the idiosyncrasies of individual commanders, for it had no place in the official traditions. It is a curious comment upon Baron Marschall von Bieberstein's proud boast at the Hague: "The officers of the German navy—I say it with emphasis—will always fulfil in the strictest manner duties which flow from the unwritten law of humanity and civilization."

## CHAPTER V.

## THE DARDANELLES : THE SEA ATTACK

**T**HE history of the Dardanelles bears witness to the importance of the Straits to Turkey. Against a naval Power like Britain or France they were the last defence of the capital, and that capital, more than any other great city of the world, was the palladium of the Power which had its seat there. It was almost all that was left to the race of Osman of their once broad European possessions. It had been the base for those proud expeditions against Vienna and the Hungarian plains when Turkey was still a conquering Power. It had been the prize for which her neighbours had lusted, and which she had still retained against all rivals. It was, in a real sense, the sign visible of Turkey's existence as a sovereign. If Constantinople fell Turkey would fall, and the doom of the capital was sealed so soon as the Allied battleships entered the Sea of Marmora.

The strategic importance of the forcing of the Dardanelles in a war with Turkey was therefore clear. But in how far would the fall of Constantinople influence the decision of the main European conflict? In the first place, it would to some extent simplify Russia's problem, and release troops for Poland and Galicia. To a

limited extent only—for there was reason to believe that the loss of Constantinople might be followed by a continuance of the campaign in Transcaucasia. At the same time there was the possibility that a mere threat to the capital might lead to a revolution which would overthrow the shaky edifice of Enver's rule. The bulk of the Turkish people did not share the passion for Germany felt by the Committee of Union and Progress, and advices from Constantinople during these days seemed to point to the imminence of a rising which would make a clean sweep of the Young Turk party, and restore the Sultan to his old place at the side of France and Britain.

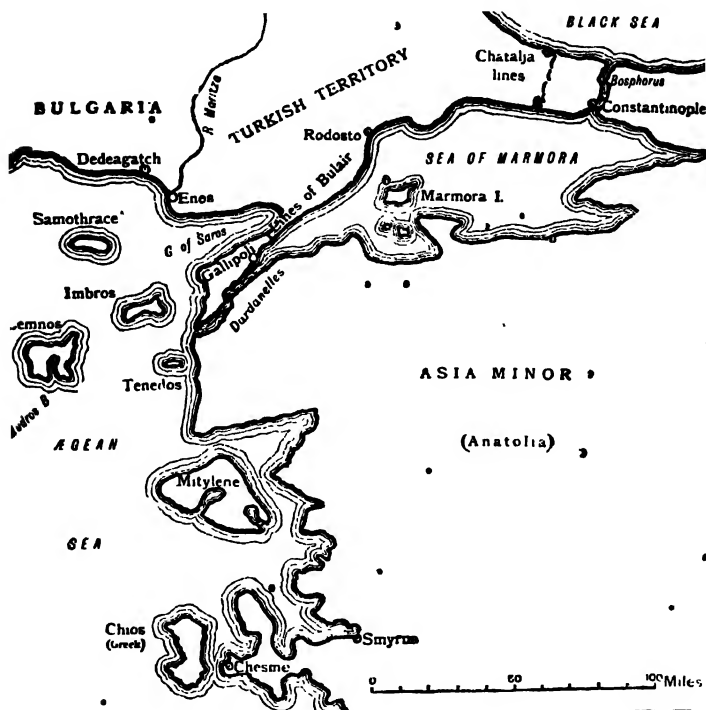
Again, the opening of the passage between the Black Sea and the Ægean would give Russia a channel for exporting her accumulated wheat supplies. The lack of these was increasing the cost of bread in Western Europe, and the restriction of Russian exports had made the rate of exchange set violently against her, so that she was paying in some cases thirty times the normal price for her foreign purchases. She also stood in sore need of a channel for the entrance of war munitions. Archangel had been closed since January, the trans-Siberian line was a costly and circuitous route for all but her imports from Japan, while entries by Norway and Sweden were at the best precarious. She needed especially rifles and ammunition, and though the Western Powers had little to spare in the way of the finished articles, they could send her



the raw materials. Certain chemicals especially, which she badly wanted, could be imported in large quantities if the Straits were open.

But the main strategic value of the Dardanelles lay in its effect upon hesitating neutrals. Turkey's defeat would have an effect upon the Balkan position like the addition of a new chemical to a compound—it would leave none of the constituents unaltered. A volume would be required to riddle out the intricacies of the situation in the Balkans. Suffice it to say that Greece, Rumania, and Bulgaria had national interests and purposes which compelled them to keep a watchful eye on each other, and which made it difficult for any one of them to move without its neighbour. Bulgaria, who had borne the heavy end of the Turkish campaign, had lost the prize of victory. Three compacts had been violated to her hurt, and she was deeply distrustful of all the ~~great~~ Powers, and especially of Russia. German financiers had befriended her in 1913, when France and Britain had stood aside, and her Stambolovists had always looked to Austria as their ally. With Greece and Serbia—especially with the latter—she had a bitter quarrel over the delimitation of territory after the Balkan wars, and she had little cause to forget Rumania's intervention. At the same time her geographical position might make it difficult for her to join the Teutonic League. A victorious Turkey would be a bad neighbour for a state of her antecedents, and the fate of Belgium, and the grounds on which Germany had justified it, were not

encouraging for a small nation. Her attitude was therefore, to begin with, a circumspect neutrality. But the first Allied guns that spoke in the Sea of Marmora would compel her to a decision, and



The Dardanelles Campaign—General sketch map of the scene of the operations.

there was good hope as to what that decision would be.

With Bulgaria on the side of the Allies Greece and Rumania would follow suit. The position of Rumania was complicated, but slowly dis-

entangling itself under the pressure of events. If her southern frontiers were safe it seemed likely that she would make her choice, and her geographical situation and her well-equipped army of more than half a million would make her a valuable ally. With Turkey out of action, and the Balkans united on the Allies' side, the most critical part of the main campaign—the long front of Russia—would be greatly eased. When the Italian guns sounded on the Isonzo and the Rumanian force could take the Austrian right wing in flank, the balance against Russia's arms might be redressed.

In a speech made just after he relinquished the office of First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. Churchill discussed the strategic purpose of the Dardanelles expedition.

"You must not forget," he told his hearers, "the prize for which you are contending. The army of Sir Ian Hamilton, the fleet of Admiral de Robeck, are separated only by a few miles from a victory such as this war has not yet seen. When I speak of victory I am not referring to those victories which crowd the daily placards of many newspapers. I am speaking of victory in the sense of a brilliant and formidable fact, shaping the destinies of nations, and shortening the duration of the war. Beyond those few miles of ridge and scrub on which our soldiers, our French comrades, our gallant Australian and New Zealand fellow-subjects are now battling, lie the downfall of a hostile Empire, the destruction of an enemy's fleet and army, the fall of a world-famous capital, and probably the accession of powerful allies. The struggle will be heavy, the risks numerous, the losses cruel; but victory, when it comes, will make amends for all. *There never was a great subsidiary operation of war in which a more complete harmony of strategic, political and economic advan-*

*tages has combined, or which stood in truer relation to the main decision which is in the central theatre.* Through the Narrows of the Dardanelles and across the ridges of the Gallipoli peninsula lie some of the shortest paths to a triumphant peace."

The contention in the words we have italicized seems to be in its strictest sense justified. The Dardanelles expedition directly subserved the main object of the war. The more disputable questions are whether the right way was taken to ensure success, and whether the forces employed in it weakened the efforts of the Allies in the main European theatre.

The true beginning of Turkey's naval war was the arrival of the *Goeben* and *Breslau* at Constantinople in the second week of the campaign. They were speedily followed by a liner, once employed in the German East African trade, which slipped through the patrols of the Allies, and brought a large cargo of mines and explosives sufficient to improvise a naval base. To her we owe the construction of the first mine-field in the Dardanelles. Meanwhile quantities of war stores were reaching Constantinople overland through Rumania, and presently Admiral Limpus and his British staff, who had been employed to reorganise the Turkish Navy, found the work passing into other hands. Early in September, both the navy and the army of Turkey were under German control, and the sea-gates were being prepared for defence against that war with the West which daily became more certain.

Our warships had been watching the outlet of the Dardanelles since early August, and when war broke out with Turkey it was easy to establish an effective blockade. Hostilities began at day-break on 3rd November, when the combined French and British squadrons bombarded the entrance forts at long range. Our ships suffered no injury, only one shell falling anywhere in their vicinity. The operation appears to have been a mere reconnaissance, intended to draw the fire of the forts and ascertain if they possessed long-range guns. It was admitted in the Admiralty report that no safe estimate could be made of the damage we inflicted.

Thereafter for some weeks this section of the war languished. On 18th November there was a sea fight off the Anatolian coast of the Black Sea, in which the luckless *Goeben* was badly damaged. On 10th December the same ship attempted to bombard Batum, and was hunted back to the Bosphorus by the Russian fleet. The Allies maintained their Dardanelles blockade, and on 13th December Lieutenant Holbrook took a submarine into the Straits through five lines of mines, and torpedoed the old Turkish warship, the *Messoudieh*, which was guarding the mine-fields. For this gallant exploit, performed under difficulties which seem on paper insuperable, he received the Victoria Cross. But the incident had no sequel. The end of the year came, and still no attempt was made upon the Straits, where week by week the German and Turkish officers were elaborating their schemes of defence.

By this time, however, the Admiralty had decided that our ample margin of naval strength and our clear superiority in gunnery, of which proof had been given in several cruiser actions, made it safe to detach a number of our older ships for operations against the Dardanelles. It may be that the *Formidable*, which was sunk in the Channel by a submarine on New Year's morning, was one of a squadron destined for this purpose. By the end of January the blockading squadrons off the Straits had been reinforced by French and British vessels from various stations, and had grown into a powerful combined fleet. We had seized the island of Tenedos, which was still Ottoman territory, and Greece tolerated the use of Lemnos, which she only nominally held, and in which the bay of Mudros supplied a useful advanced base for naval operations.

These began in earnest with the attack on the forts at the entrance to the Dardanelles on Friday, 19th February. A month later came the attack on the forts at the Narrows. All the operations from 19th February to 18th March were part of a general plan. They represented an attempt to destroy the defences of the Dardanelles, and force a passage into the Sea of Marmora, by naval power alone. Before describing these movements in detail, it will be well to examine with some closeness the strategical and tactical conditions of the problem, for on our view of them depends our judgment of the possibility of success, and, therefore, of the justification of this "subsidiary" operation. .

## 112 The British Navy during the War [1915]

A naval attack on the Dardanelles without the co-operation of a military force would be a battle of ships against forts, and it had long been widely held by experts that in such a contest the advantage would lie with the forts. 'What were the grounds and the historical warrant of this opinion?

There is an interesting letter of Nelson's written on July 29th, 1794, at the time when we were driving the French from Corsica, and preparing to reduce the forts of Calvi. It had been suggested that the attack should be made from the sea, but Nelson demurred. He wrote to Lord Hood: "I took the liberty of observing that the business of laying wood before walls was much altered of late, and even if they had no hot shot, which I believed they had, that the quantity of powder and shot which would be fired away on such an attack could be much better directed from a battery on shore."

Armour-clads have replaced wooden walls, and high-explosive shells have superseded red-hot shot, but it still remains true that shore batteries are a more effective weapon of assault against fortifications than even the heaviest guns mounted in the most powerful ships. For a little there was some disposition to believe that improvements in naval artillery and the increase of armoured protection might turn the scale in favour of the ships. But modern progress in armaments is quite as advantageous to the fort as to the ship, and one of our highest living

authorities \* has argued that, if anything, the advantage of the fort has increased since Nelson's day. He has even suggested what at first seems a startling paradox, that the old wooden battleship, with its tiers of smooth-bore guns, could, at close range, pour into a land battery a more formidable fire, with a better chance of scoring effective hits, than the modern battleship with its few heavy guns at long range, even though these are weapons of the highest precision, fitted with telescopic sights, and directed with the aid of range-finders and observers.

In former times, though the shore battery generally beat the ship, there were exceptional cases where the victory lay with the latter. Such were Exmouth's destruction of Algiers in 1816, and Napier's exploit at Acre in 1840. But neither was a true test. The Algerian and Egyptian gunners not only shot badly, but allowed the hostile fleet to come up and anchor at close quarters without opening fire. It was the memory of these successes which led the Allied admirals in the Crimean War to believe that in the same way they could silence the forts on the sea front at Sebastopol. The attempt, made on 17th October, 1854, ended disastrously, with six ships out of action, and more than 500 men killed and wounded.

A year later, on the anniversary of the Sebastopol bombardment, the forts of Kinburn were silenced by a naval attack. Napoleon the Third's

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\* Lord Sydenham in his standard work on "Fortification."



three floating batteries, the *Devastation*, *Lave*, and *Tonnant*, were engaged in the operations—the first of ironclads, and the pioneers of all modern armoured fleets. This event produced a new theory, and for some time it was supposed that the coming of the armoured ship had changed the conditions of the problem. But all subsequent experience has belied this view. In the American Civil War the repeated naval attacks on Charleston ended in failure. It is true that in the attack on New Orleans Admiral Farragut succeeded in passing the forts that defended the narrow waterway of the Mississippi, but he did not attempt to silence them. He steamed past them, and then had the city at his mercy on its unprotected flank. His feat—not an attack on the forts, but an evasion of them—would have been impossible had the river channel been protected by a modern mine-field.

The most significant incident, perhaps, was our bombardment of Alexandria in 1882. At first sight it would seem to prove that a fleet could in a few hours and with trifling losses master forts on land. But a careful study of the bombardment, which was made by an American Commission with the assistance of our own naval officers, put the matter in a very different light. Our squadron was the most powerful which up to that date had ever operated against forts. One of the ships, the old *Inflexible*, was the Dreadnought of her day, mounting four 16-inch guns, which she brought into action at close range. We expended an enormous amount of ammunition

—about 1,740 heavy projectiles, 7-inch and upwards, including 88 rounds from the guns of the *Inflexible*, together with 1,400 smaller shells, and about 33,500 bullets from machine guns and rifles. The conditions were perfect—close range, calm weather, no mines, and highly incompetent opponents. Yet it was proved that not more than three of the Egyptian guns were directly put out of action by our fire. It is true that many of them were dismounted or silenced in other ways. Several were disabled by their own recoil; they were so badly mounted that it flung them backwards with their muzzles in the air. Many others ceased firing merely because hits upon the parapet in front of them buried their mountings in earth and masonry; but in such cases an hour's work with pick and shovel would have cleared the guns. The whole defence system was bad. Most of the pieces were mounted *en barbette* over a low parapet that gave hardly any cover to the gunners. The guns at one fort were placed in front of a barrack wall, which stopped and exploded scores of shells that otherwise would have flown harmlessly overhead. What would have happened under better conditions was shown by the fact that a small battery of disappearing guns, constructed some years before by an American officer, Colonel Chaille-Long, was never silenced, and was firing the day after the bombardment. The shooting of the Egyptian gunners was bad with the rifled pieces, though they made a good many hits with the older smooth-bores. Lord Sydenham believes that if they had made as good shoot-

ing with the modern guns our fleet would have been driven off with heavy loss. As it was, had not the forts surrendered, twenty-eight guns could have opened fire next day, when our fleet was almost bankrupt of ammunition. The natural deduction from the Alexandria bombardment was that a naval attack on modern forts, well armed and adequately manned, would be a highly critical operation, would most probably end in failure, and could only succeed at the cost of serious loss.

This conclusion was so generally accepted that during the Spanish-American War the United States Navy Department repeatedly warned the admirals that battleships and heavy cruisers must not be risked in close-range action with forts. For example, when the War Secretary asked for the support of the navy in forcing the entrance of Santiago Harbour, the Secretary of the Navy passed on the request to Admiral Sampson, but ended his cable message with the words: "I leave the matter to your discretion, except that the United States armoured vessels must not be risked." All that the navy ventured upon was a long-range bombardment of the Spanish coast fortifications, attacks that were little more than demonstrations, for no serious attempt was made to silence the land batteries. A few guns mounted on Socapa Point at Santiago, and very badly served, were sufficient to prevent Admiral Sampson from risking a close attack.

It was the same in the Russo-Japanese War. Admiral Togo never risked his battleships and

cruisers in a close attack on the sea batteries of Port Arthur. There were occasional long-range bombardments with no result, and the reduction of the fortress was due to the attack by land. Similarly Tsing-tau in the present war fell not to Admiral Kato's squadron, but to General Kamio's army.

It may be said, however, that though ships are not likely to silence forts, forts cannot prevent ships running past them. The argument is not relevant to the case of the Dardanelles, where, in the long run, not only a passage, but the occupation of the passage, is necessary, as Hornby found in 1878. But in any case it is unsound, for the development of submarine mines and torpedo warfare has made it all but impossible to evade the fort. A mine-field in a channel, protected by a few well-mounted guns, with searchlights and quick-firers to prevent mine-sweeping by night, is for a fleet a practically impassable barrier. The mine-field cannot be disposed of until the fort has been destroyed.

We may thus sum up the advantages of the fort over the ships. The ship is liable to be sunk by gun-fire, submarine or drift mines, and torpedoes launched from tubes on shore. The fort can only be battered by gun-fire. The possible protection of a gun afloat is always limited, for to accumulate armour beyond a certain point is to sacrifice a corresponding amount of power, armament, or ammunition. On the other hand, there is practically no limit to the defences that can be accumulated around the gun

on shore in the shape of earthworks, concrete, and armour. Again, the ship affords a much better target to hostile fire. To make effective hits on a shore battery is difficult, even with the help of aeroplane observation. Hits on the outer slope of the fort do little damage. Shrapnel fire can be met by head cover, for it is only a question of stopping a shower of bullets. The only serious harm can come from shells exploding on the crest of the parapet, or penetrating the embrasures and bursting beside a gun, or making direct hits on the gun or its mounting. Now hits of this kind are 'bull's-eyes. On the other hand, the vulnerable surface of the ship is large. Hits on the gun positions or the water-lines, or shell explosions starting fires on board, are all serious.

It must further be noted that, when the attack is made on coast batteries with high ground rising near the water's edge, the position of the ship is still more disadvantageous. Modern warships are armed with long, high-velocity guns, designed for direct hits at considerable range. It is not easy for them to bring effective fire to bear on a target at a high level above the sea. Batteries on rising ground are therefore difficult to reach, and this difficulty is enormously increased if they are made up of mobile guns which can change position when the ship gets the range. There are certain varieties of heavy howitzers which are comparatively easy to move about, and the plunging fire of howitzers, even if their calibre is moderate, is specially dangerous to ships, since it attacks with high-explosive shell

some of their weakest points, such as decks, engine-room gratings, and tops of barbettes and turrets. Even field artillery can be used on high ground from concealed positions to drive off the sweepers from a mine-field. Finally, mistakes are readily made in "spotting" the fire position of a land battery; but the fountains of water caused by shells striking the sea are an invaluable aid to the gunners on land.\*

Such being the accepted doctrine among naval and military students of the question, it may well be asked why the scheme of forcing the Dardanelles by a naval attack alone was ever accepted by the British Government. It is known that very high

\* Moltke, writing from Pera in 1836, discussed the forcing of the Dardanelles by a fleet, and well summarized the difficulties from the standpoint of that time: "The ball fired from a ship against a land battery will, in the most favourable case, kill a few men and dismount a gun, while that fired by a land battery may quite well put a ship out of action. Men, guns, and ammunition are incomparably safer in the land battery than behind a ship's walls. Most important is the circumstance that the ship's rolling makes accurate aiming impossible. The land battery presents a target about four and a half feet high, and a slight little roll increases or diminishes the elevation of the guns to such an extent that a whole broadside strikes too high or too low. But the great gun of a land battery is still, the gunner takes an exact aim, and his target is a wall twenty or thirty feet high, a hundred feet long, and vulnerable all over. Balls that go too low may yet hit by ricochet; balls that go too high may destroy masts, spars, and sails. The larger number of guns is on the side of the fleet; the more favourable conditions on the side of the land battery."—Mr. Spenser Wilkinson's translation.

naval authority was opposed to it ; it is equally true that certain naval authorities approved of it. On what grounds ? Probably because there was an idea abroad that new conditions had been introduced into the problem. There is always a tendency to begin by exaggerating the effect of a new weapon. The Dreadnought, the long-range gun, the submarine, have each been hailed as about to revolutionize warfare. It was presumed that the huge high-explosive shells of the modern warship would make land batteries untenable, not by silencing their guns one by one, but by acting like flying mines, the explosion of which would shatter the defences and produce a panic among the gunners. Once the forts were thus temporarily overcome, landing-parties would complete the task, the mine-fields would be cleared, and the passage be won. It was also anticipated that with the long range of the newest naval guns the forts could be bombarded from a distance at which their own armament would be ineffective. The notion was that the outer forts at the entrance to the Straits could be silenced by the converging fire of a number of ships from the open sea, while the attack on the inner forts would be carried on by individual fire from ships in the Gulf of Saros, which, with aeroplanes to direct them, would send their shells over the hills of the Gallipoli peninsula. These two factors—aerial reconnaissance, and the increased range of naval guns—were believed to have changed the whole conditions of the enterprise.

It would be unfair to say that there was no

colour for this forecast. But it erred in strangely neglecting and underestimating other factors in the situation, and in unduly simplifying the problem. It was not a mere question of a duel between the guns of the fleet, and those of the permanent fortifications. Had it been, there would have been much to be said for the optimistic view. But the defences of the Dardanelles had been organized on a system which took the fullest advantage of natural features, and was based on past experience and a scientific knowledge of modern warfare. It was no improvised Turkish expedient, but the work of the German General Staff. It contemplated an attack, not only by a fleet, but by a large military force acting in conjunction. When, therefore, the Allies, to the surprise of their enemies, decided upon a mere naval attack, the problem of defence was exceedingly simplified.

To appreciate the Allies' difficulties we must consider briefly the topography of the Straits. Their northern shore is formed by the peninsula of Gallipoli, a tongue of land some fifty miles long, which varies in width from twelve to two or three miles. The country is a mass of rocky ridges rising to a height of over 700 feet from the sea. The hills are so steep and sharply cut that to reach their tops in many places is a matter of sheer climbing. There is little cultivation, few villages, and no properly engineered roads. Most of the land is covered with a dense scrub from three to six feet high, with stunted forests in the hollows. Communications are so bad that the usual way



from village to village is not by land, but by boat along the inner or outer coast. At the head of the Dardanelles, on the European side, is the town and harbour of Gallipoli, the headquarters of the naval defence of the Straits.

The southern shore is also hilly. Near the entrance on the Asiatic side there is the flat and marshy plain of Troy, which is bounded on the east by hills running to 3,000 feet. On both sides the high ground overhangs the sea passage, and on the north side for about twelve miles the hills form a line of cliffs, with narrow half-moons of beach at the base, and here and there a stream making a gully in the rampart. As everywhere in the Mediterranean, there is practically no tide, but a strong current sets continuously down the Straits from the Sea of Marmora. Its speed varies, but it often rises to four knots an hour. North-easterly winds are prevalent, and before the days of steam these often closed the passage for weeks at a time to ingoing traffic. In the spring bad weather is not infrequent. Sudden gales with driving showers of rain, and long spells of mist in calmer weather, are a bar to naval operations.

There are two groups of forts. The first is at the entrance—on the north side, Cape Hellen and Sedd-el-Bahr, with one or two adjacent batteries; on the opposite shore Kum Kale and Orkanieh. None of these forts were heavily armed, for it was recognized that in any case they would be at a disadvantage against a long-range attack from a fleet in the open sea. The entrance forts were merely the outposts of the real defensive.

The second group is at the Narrows. Fourteen miles from the mouth the Straits close in to a width of about three-quarters of a mile. Up to this point their general course has been from south-west to north-east, but now the channel makes a short turn directly northward before resuming its original direction. There is thus within a distance of a few miles a sharp double bend, and guns placed in position at the water's edge can cross their fire against ships ascending the Straits, which can also be brought under end-on fire from guns at the top of the Narrows.

At the entrance to the Narrows are the forts of Chanak, or Sultanieh Kalesi, on the Asiatic side, and Kilid Bahr, on the European. The slopes above the latter were studded with batteries, some commanding the approach to the Narrows, others commanding the seaway towards Gallipoli. Along both sides, but especially between Chanak and Nagara, the low ground was lined with batteries. It was possible to attack the forts at the entrance to the Narrows at fairly long range from the wider channel below the bend, but there was no room to bring any large number of ships into action at the same time. Once the entrance was passed all fighting must be at close range, but the strength of the defence did not depend only on the batteries. An attacking fleet had other weapons to face besides the guns.

There was first the obstruction of the channel by submarine mines. To get rid of these by sweeping was probably impossible, for the light vessels which alone could be employed, had to face not

only the fire of the forts, but that of mobile guns on the higher ground. Further, at various parts in the Narrows, torpedo tubes were mounted in concealed positions, and the land torpedo tube is a formidable weapon. It can fire a more powerful missile than those discharged from ships, and since its station is fixed it can make good shooting. Again, the descending current could be used to send down drift mines upon the attacking ships. The artillery defence was further supplemented by howitzer batteries on the heights, difficult to locate, easy to move if located, and therefore almost impossible to silence.

It is clear that a fleet endeavouring to force a channel thus defended was at the gravest disadvantage. There was only one way to complete success—the co-operation of a land army. By that means there was a chance of gaining possession of the heights behind the forts, attacking them in reverse, assisting the fleet to silence them, and then destroying the mine-field. Only a landing force, too, could deal with the mobile batteries. Such an army would be met by many difficulties. The country, all ridges and pockets, was hard to operate in, and the Turks, who when acting on the defensive are among the best soldiers in the world, were certain under German leadership to take advantage of every natural feature. They had, in fact, converted the Gallipoli peninsula and the hill country on the Asiatic side into two vast fortresses manned by powerful armies. At the outbreak of war there were 200,000 Turkish soldiers in the Constantinople area, and this number, in spite

of Caucasian and Egyptian adventures, was not allowed seriously to dwindle. The garrison of Constantinople alone was kept up to 180,000 men, and by February, when the Turkish offensive elsewhere had failed, there was probably well over half a million of men available for the Straits defence. They had no railway communication to speak of, both the Adrianople and the Anatolian lines being too distant, but they had an uninterrupted water route from Europe and Asia through the Sea of Marmora. We cannot tell the number of guns which they had mounted on the shores, but we know something of their calibre. At the Narrows forts there were 14-inch Krupp guns, which threw a shell of 1,366 pounds. They had a number of 11-inch guns, and at the outer forts some of 10.2-inch. Lighter guns of from 6- to 9-inch calibre were in all the forts. They had besides a number of field howitzers, which do not seem to have been higher than the 8-inch variety. The defect of Turkey in the past had been shortage of munitions, but in this case her German masters saw that she was well supplied. Large stores of Krupp shells had been accumulated in Constantinople during the winter, and when the struggle began there was no slackening of the Turkish fire.

It is a simple matter to be wise after the event, and it is easy to judge a military problem pedantically, without allowing for the chances of war. Every operation is to some extent a gamble, even after all the unknown quantities seem to have been determined. History showed a clear verdict

on the handicap of a contest between ships and forts, without the assistance of a land army. History, too, showed that to pass the Dardanelles was a perilous achievement, unless the invader held the Gallipoli peninsula, and so could secure his supplies and his retreat. But it is permissible sometimes to go in defiance of history, and create new precedents—laudable if the attempt succeeds, excusable if it fails. We will therefore be prudent if we suspend judgment on the strategy which made a premature attempt on the Straits with a fleet alone, until we know more about the circumstances which gave it birth. The Government may well have argued that if by a bold dash the passage could be rushed there was a good chance that events might happen which would meet the historical objection to winning a route but not holding it. It was possible—nay, probable—that the appearance of the Allied squadron before Constantinople, would be followed by the Turkish surrender, or, which was much the same thing, by a Turkish revolution. Or, if the Sultan abandoned the capital and retired to Asia Minor, it would be no very hard matter to open the way through the Bosphorus for the Russian Fleet, and the defenders of Gallipoli would have to choose between a prompt surrender and a hopeless isolation. If the throw was daring, the stakes at any rate were high.

It is likely, too, that there was a direct political motive for making the attack at the date and in the manner it was made. In the beginning of the year, especially in the first weeks of February,

things had reached a critical stage in south-eastern Europe. Marshal von der Goltz from his perch in Constantinople had been fluttering the doves of the Balkans. His visits to Sofia were believed to have been highly fruitful, and there was a general impression that Bulgaria might be betrayed into a false step. On the action of Bulgaria, as we have seen, depended to a large extent the policy of the whole Balkan group, and the Allies, especially Russia, had cause for anxiety. There may have been a Russian request for a diversion which would at any rate confirm Bulgarian neutrality. Of this we cannot be certain until the secret political history of the war is published ; but if such a request was made, there is evidence that it was not with the assent of the Russian High Command in the field. On this hypothesis it was not necessary to force the passage of the Straits ; a vigorous thrust would be a partial success.

We have examined the Dardanelles question at some length, for it is likely in after years to be by far the most debated portion of the campaign. Facile contemporary criticism is to be deplored ; but it is well even now to understand the main lines of the problem. It is time to turn to the details of the first phase—the attack by sea.

The first step was comparatively easy. By the middle of February a considerable naval force, French and British, had been concentrated at the entrance to the Dardanelles. With two exceptions, the larger British ships belonged to the pre-Dreadnought class ; but there were also

present the *Inflexible*, which had been in the Battle of the Falkland Islands, and the new super-Dreadnought, the *Queen Elizabeth*. The latter belonged to the most recent and most powerful class of battleship in the world. She was one of a group of five which, when war began, were still in the builder's hands, and in the ordinary course she would not have been commissioned till the late summer of 1915. Her main armament was made up of eight 15-inch guns, so mounted as to give a fire of four guns ahead or astern, and of the whole eight on either side.

The operations against the outer forts began on Friday, 19th February, 1915. The ships engaged were the *Inflexible*, *Agamemnon*, *Cornwallis*, *Vengeance*, and *Triumph*—British; and the *Bouvet*, *Suffren*, and *Gaulois*—French; covered by a flotilla of destroyers.\* The naval force was under the command of Vice-Admiral Sackville Carden, and the French squadron was under Rear-Admiral Guepratte. Behind the battle-line lay the new mother-ship for seaplanes, the *Ark Royal*, named after Howard's flagship in the war with the

\* *Inflexible*, 17,250 tons, eight 12-inch guns, sixteen 4-inch guns; *Agamemnon*, 16,750 tons, four 12-inch guns, ten 9.2-inch guns; *Cornwallis*, 14,000 tons, four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch guns; *Vengeance*, 12,950 tons, four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch guns; *Triumph*, 11,980 tons, four 10-inch guns, fourteen 7.5-inch guns; *Bouvet*, 12,200 tons, two 12-inch guns, two 10.8-inch guns, eight 5.5-inch guns, eight 4-inch guns; *Suffren*, 12,730 tons, four 12-inch guns, ten 6.4-inch guns; *Gaulois*, 11,260 tons, four 12-inch guns, ten 5.5-inch guns.

Spanish Armada. From her aircraft were sent up to watch the fire of the battleships and signal the result.

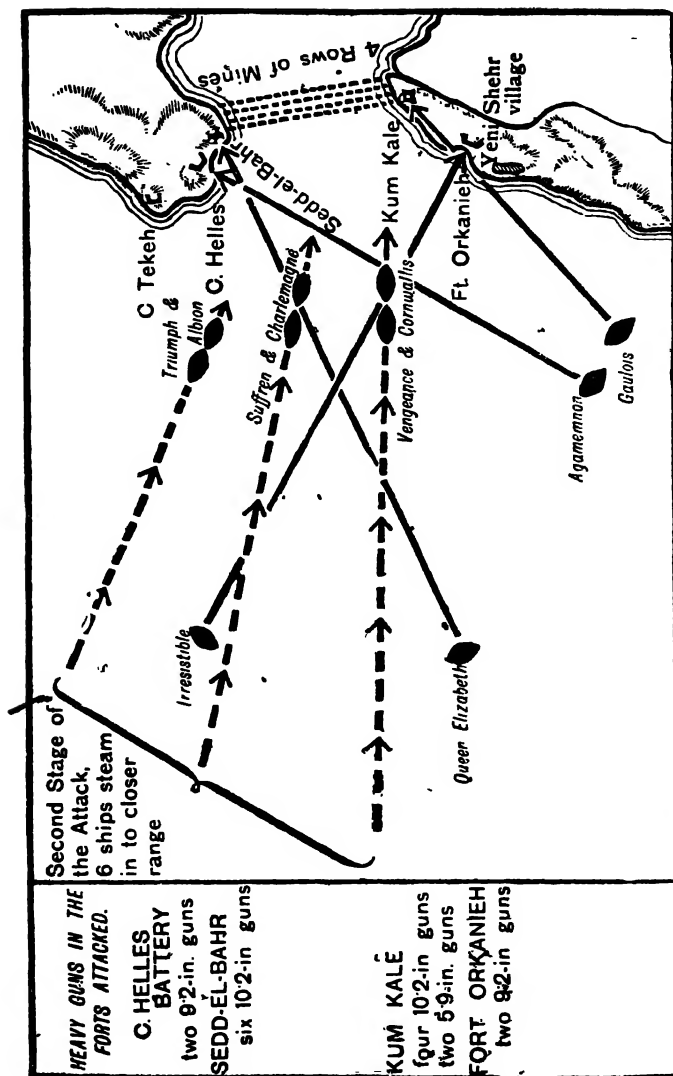
The action began at 8 a.m. It was clear that the forts at Cape Helles, on the point of the peninsula, and at Kum Kale, on the opposite shore, were frequently hit, and at times seemed to be smothered in bursting shells. It was harder to make out what was happening to the low earth-works of the batteries about Sedd-el-Bahr. All morning the bombardment continued; it was like target practice, for not a single shot was fired in reply. Admiral Carden came to the conclusion that the forts had been seriously damaged, and at a quarter to three in the afternoon, gave the order to close in. What followed shows that aerial observation of long-range fire is no easy matter. As the ships steamed nearer, the hitherto silent and apparently destroyed forts began to shoot. They made bad practice, for no one of the six ships that had shortened range was hit. By sundown the European batteries were quiet again, but Kum Kale was still firing, when, on account of the failing light, Admiral Carden withdrew the fleet.

For some days there was bad weather, but by the morning of Thursday, 25th February, it had sufficiently improved for operations to be resumed. At 10 a.m. on that day, 25th February, the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Agamemnon*, and *Irresistible*,\* and the French battleship *Gaulois*, renewed the

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\* 15,000 tons, four 12-inch and twelve 6-inch guns.





Attack on the Outer Forts (Dardanelles). ●

long-range bombardment of the outer forts. It was clear that these had not been seriously damaged by the action of the 19th, and what injury had been done had been repaired in the interval. Once again the four forts, Sedd-el-Bahr, Cape Helles, Kum Kale, and Orkanieh, were attacked. We know from the Admiralty report that of these the first mounted six 10.2-inch guns, the second two 9.2-inch, the third four 10.2-inch and two 5.9-inch, and the fourth two 9.2-inch. Against the sixteen heavy guns of the forts the four ships brought into action twenty pieces heavier than anything mounted on the land, including the 15-inch guns of the *Queen Elizabeth*, the most powerful weapon ever used in naval war. The forts were thus greatly outmatched, and the long range of the *Queen Elizabeth's* guns enabled her to come into the fight at a distance where nothing from the land could possibly touch her.

In an hour and a half the *Queen Elizabeth* had silenced the Cape Helles guns, but not before they had hit the *Agamemnon*, a shell fired at a range of six miles bursting on board her, with a loss of three men killed and five wounded. This was the only casualty we suffered during the first stage of the bombardment. At 11.30 a.m. the *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* came into action, and, running into close range, silenced the lighter armament of the Cape Helles battery. The attack on the Asiatic forts was at the same time reinforced by two of the French ships, the *Suffren* and the *Charlemagne*, which poured in a heavy fire at a

range of only 2,000 yards. Early in the afternoon the *Triumph* and the *Albion* \* attacked Sedd-el-Bahr at close range. It says much for the courage and discipline of the Turkish artillerymen that, though they had to face overwhelming odds, their last gun was not silenced till after 5 p.m.

Little daylight remained, but, covered by the battleships and destroyers, a number of North Sea trawlers at once set to work to sweep for mines in the entrance. The work was resumed next morning at sunrise, and the mine-field was cleared for a distance of four miles up the Straits. Then the *Albion*, *Vengeance*, and *Majestic* † steamed in between the headlands, and opened a long-range fire on Fort Dardanos, a work on the Asiatic side some distance below the Narrows. It was not heavily armed, its best guns being four 5.9 Krupps. As the battleships opened fire, a reply came not only from Dardanos, but from several unlocated batteries at various points along the shore. The Turkish fire, however, did little harm, and we were able to attack the rear of the entrance forts, and drive off several bodies of Turkish troops. One party near Kum Kale was driven across the bridge near the mouth of the river Mendere (the ancient Simois), and the bridge itself destroyed by shell fire.

We believed that by this time the Turks had everywhere been forced to abandon the defences

\* 12,950 tons, four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch.

† The oldest battleship type in the Navy, 14,900 tons, four 12-inch guns, twelve 6-inch.

at the entrance, and landing parties of Royal Marines were sent ashore with explosives to complete the destruction of the guns in the forts. This they successfully accomplished, but near Kum Kale they encountered a detachment of the enemy, and, after a hot skirmish, had to fall back to their boats with a few casualties. On this slender basis the Turkish bulletins built up a report of landing parties everywhere repulsed with heavy loss.

The result of the day's operations was that we had cleared the entrance to the Straits. This was the easiest part of the problem, and only the beginning of the formidable task assigned to the Allied fleets. The real defence of the Dardanelles—the forts at the Narrows—had not been touched. Nevertheless, with that misleading optimism which has done so much to paralyze national effort, the Press of France and Britain wrote as if the fall of the outer forts had decided the fate of Constantinople. In that city at the moment there was undoubtedly something of a panic among civilians, but the German and Turkish Staffs were in the best of spirits. They were greatly comforted by the time it had taken the powerful Allied fleet to destroy the outer forts, and they believed that the inner forts were impregnable. Their long-range attacks would be impossible; no large number of ships could be brought simultaneously into action, and drifting mines and torpedoes could be used to supplement the artillery defence. Enver, not usually partial to the truth, was for once in a way correct when

he told a correspondent: "The real defence of the Straits is yet to come. That lies where the difficult waterway deprives ships of their power to manœuvre freely, and obliges them to move in a narrow defile commanded by artillery and mines."

For a few days there were strong northerly winds, but in spite of the rough weather the mine-sweepers continued their work below the Narrows.

On Thursday, March 4th, the battleships were again in action. Some attacked the forts inside the Straits, probably Dardanos and Soghandere, and a French cruiser in the Gulf of Saros demolished a look-out station at Cape Gaba Tepe. The published casualty lists show that among the ships engaged were the *Ocean* and the *Lord Nelson*.<sup>\*</sup> A landing party of Royal Marines near Kum ~~Kale~~ were driven back to their boats by a superior Turkish force with the relatively large loss of 22 killed, 22 wounded, and 3 missing. On March 5th there was a demonstration against Smyrna, a British and French detachment, under Vice-Admiral Peirse, bombarding the outer forts. As the attack was not pushed, it was probably only intended to induce Enver to keep a considerable force in that neighbourhood.

On March 6th the weather was again fine, with a smooth sea, and a preliminary attempt was made on the Narrows forts. On the preceding

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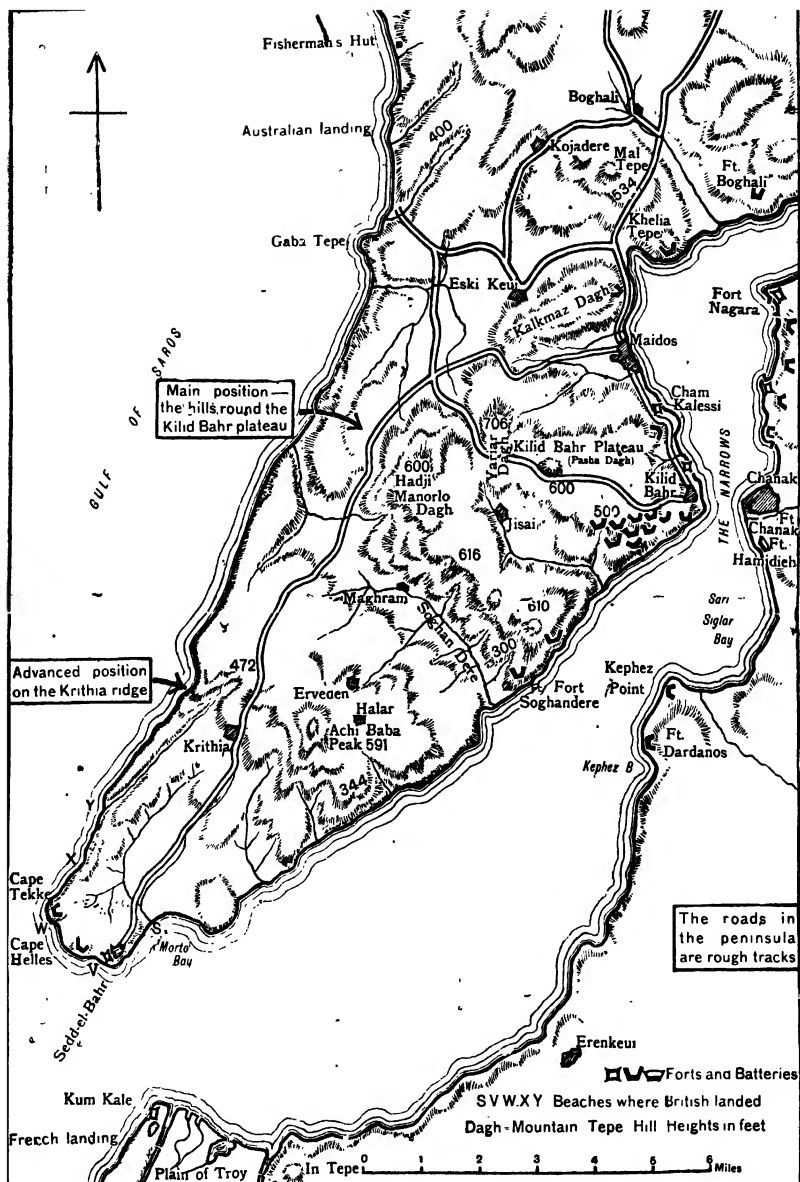
\* A sister ship of the *Agamemnon*, 16,500 tons, four 12-inch guns, ten 9.2-inch.

day some of the ships had entered the Straits and drawn the fire of the forts at Kilid Bahr. There was an explosion in one of them, and after that it ceased firing. On the morning of the 6th, the *Vengeance*, *Albion*, *Majestic*, *Prince George*,\* and *Suffren* steamed into the Straits and attacked the forts on both sides just below the Narrows. The fire was chiefly directed against Dardanos on the Asiatic, and Soghandere on the European shore—works which may be regarded as the outposts of the main Narrows defence. The attacking ships were struck repeatedly by shells, but no serious damage was done, and there was no loss of life.

This attack from inside the Straits was, however, a secondary operation. The main attack, from which great results were expected, was made by the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Agamemnon*, and *Ocean*, from the Gulf of Saros, on the outer side of the Gallipoli peninsula. Lying off the point of Gaba Tepe, they sent their shells over the intervening hills, with aeroplanes directing their fire. Their target was two of the forts at Chanak, on the Asiatic side of the Narrows, about twelve miles off. These forts had a very heavy armament, including 14-inch guns, and it was hoped to destroy them by indirect fire, to which they had no means of replying. The Turks replied from various points on the heights of the Peninsula with well-concealed howitzers and field guns, and three shells struck the *Queen Elizabeth*.

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\* A sister ship of the *Majestic*.



The South End of the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Dardanelles  
(Showing the landing places and the Turkish positions.)

## 138 The British Navy during the War [1915]

Next day, March 7th, the attack was renewed. Four French battleships, the *Bouvet*, *Charlemagne*, *Gaulois*, and *Suffren*, attacked the forts from inside the Straits, and engaged Dardanos, which they succeeded in silencing. Behind them, farther out, lay the *Agamemnon*, and *Lord Nelson*, firing at a range of from 12,000 to 14,000 yards at the forts at the Narrows entrance. Chanak, which the *Queen Elizabeth* had been trying to demolish the day before, brought its heavy guns into action. The *Gaulois*, *Agamemnon*, and *Lord Nelson* were hit several times, but we believed that we had put the Chanak forts, the strongest of the Narrows, out of action. Subsequent experience showed that it was a difficult matter permanently to silence the forts. Reports of German officers made it clear that under the heavy fire of the ships it was hard to keep the guns constantly in action, not so much on account of any serious damage, but because the batteries were flooded with stifling vapours from the shells, and it was necessary to withdraw the men until the air cleared. Further, the defenders had been ordered to economize ammunition, and to reserve their fire for the closer attack which they believed would follow. The fact, therefore, that a fort ceased firing was no proof that it had been really silenced. Again and again during these operations we heard of forts being silenced, which next day, or a few days after, could bring most of their guns into action.

The following week saw nothing but minor operations. On the 10th an attempt was made to shell the Bulair defences at long range, and the



British warships shelled some new batteries of light guns which the Turks had established near Morto Bay, on the European side of the entrance to the Straits. The Turkish Government sent out a report that the Allied fleets had been unsuccessfully bombarding the defences at Sedd-el-Bahr and Kum Kale. The British Press treated this as an impudent fiction, and pointed out that the forts there had been destroyed many days before. But the Turkish Communique had a basis of fact. We had destroyed the forts, but we had not occupied the ground on both sides of the entrance. The Turks had accordingly entrenched themselves strongly near the ruins, and mounted guns, and these we attacked on March 10th and 11th.

At that time, misled by the optimism of the newspapers, the ordinary man in France and Britain counted with certainty on the speedy news that our fleet was steaming through the Sea of Marmora on the way to Constantinople. When tidings came that the light cruiser *Amethyst* had, on March 15th, actually made a dash into the Narrows, we believed that the Turkish defence had collapsed. The *Amethyst's* enterprise was, apparently, part of a mine-sweeping expedition, and also, perhaps, a daring reconnaissance in which the little ship drew the fire of the upper forts. She seems to have got but a short way, and to have lost heavily in the attempt. But her exploit, magnified through Greek channels, made us believe that the Narrows defences had been seriously damaged, and that the time was ripe for a determined effort to force a passage. The com-

bined fleet had now grown to a formidable strength, and included a Russian cruiser, the *Askold*,\* which appeared from somewhere or other on March 3rd, Vice-Admiral Carden had been compelled by ill-health to relinquish the command, and Vice-Admiral John Michael de Robeck succeeded him.

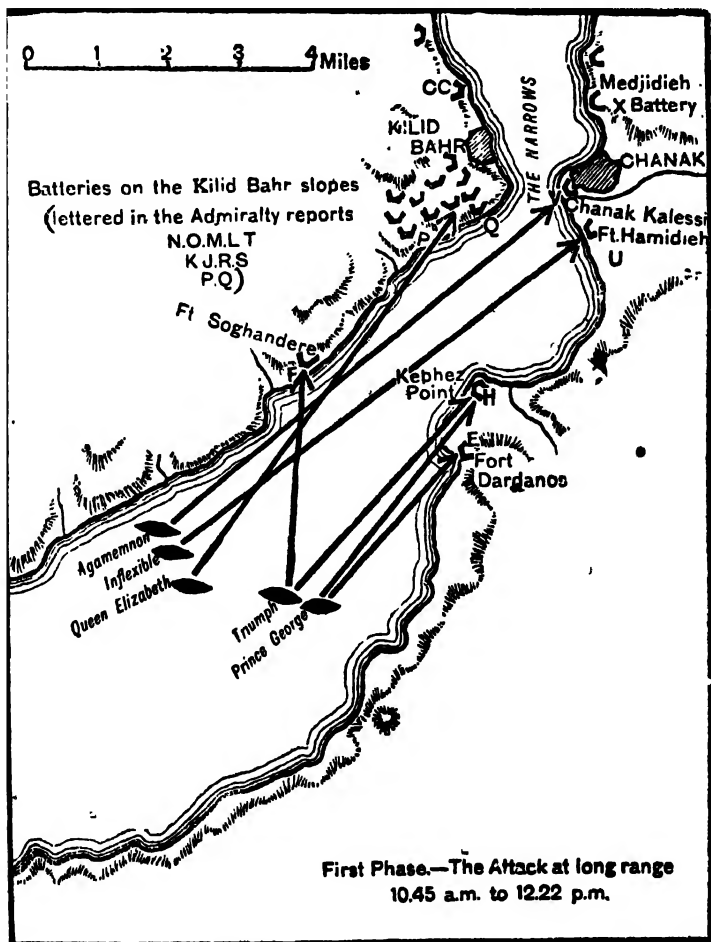
The great effort was made on Thursday, March 18th. It was a bright clear day, with a light wind and calm sea. At a quarter to eleven in the forenoon the *Queen Elizabeth*, *Inflexible*, *Agamemnon*, *Lord Nelson*, *Triumph*, and *Prince George*, steamed up the Straits towards the Narrows. 'The first four ships engaged the forts of Chanak and the battery on the point opposite, while the *Triumph* and *Prince George* kept the batteries lower down occupied by firing at Soghandere, Dardanos, and Kephez Point. After the bombardment had lasted for an hour and a half, during which the ships were fired upon not only by the forts but by howitzers and field guns on the heights, the French squadron, *Bouvet*, *Charlemagne*, *Gaulois*, and *Suffren*, came into action, steaming in to attack the forts at short range. Under the combined fire of the ten ships the forts once more ceased firing. A third squadron then entered the Straits to push the attack further. This was made up of six British battleships, the *Albion*, *Irresistible*, *Majestic*, *Ocean*, *Swiftsure*,† and *Vengeance*. As they steered towards the

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\* Our sailors called it "The Packet of Woodbines," from its five thin funnels.

† A sister ship of the *Triumph*, 11,980 tons, four 10-inch, fourteen 7.5-inch guns.

Chanak the four French ships were withdrawn in order to make room for them in the narrow waters.



The Attack on the Narrows (1).

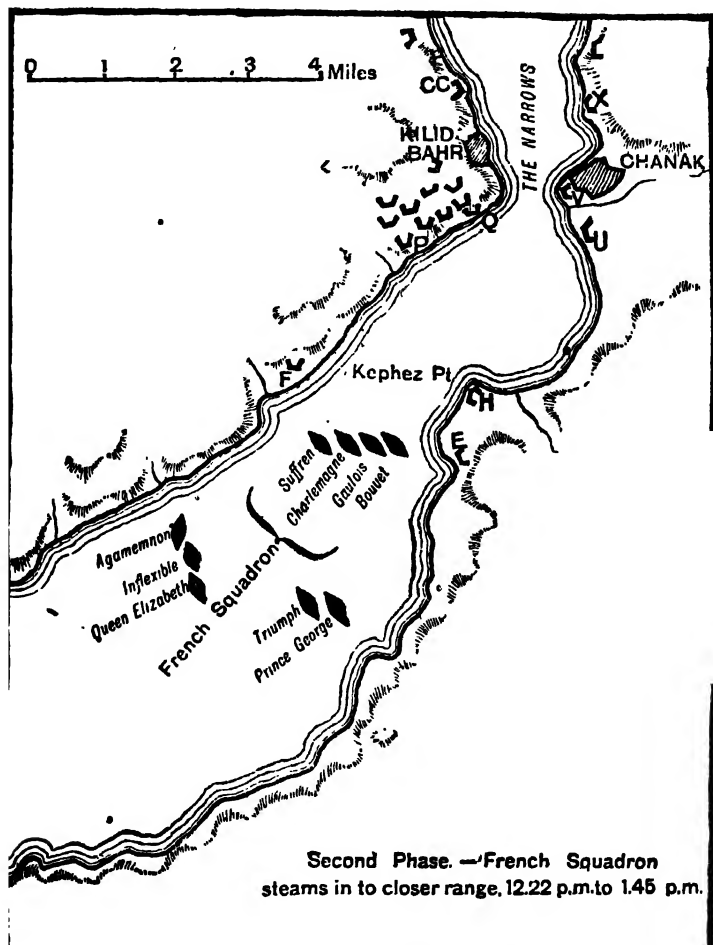
But in the process of this change all the forts suddenly began to fire again, which showed that

none of them was seriously damaged. According to Turkish accounts, only one big gun had been dismantled.

Then came the first disaster of the day. The French squadron was moving down to the open water inside the Straits, being still under fire from the inner forts. An officer on a British destroyer, who was watching its movements, reported that he saw three large shells strike the *Bouvet* almost simultaneously, and that immediately after there was a loud explosion, and she was hidden in a cloud of smoke. The first impression was that she had been seriously damaged by shell-fire, but her real wound was got from one of the mines which the Turks were now sending down with the current. They had waited to begin this new attack till the narrow waterway was full of ships. As the smoke cleared, the *Bouvet* was seen to be heeling over. She sank in three minutes, in thirty-six fathoms of water, carrying with her most of her crew.

- The attack on the forts continued as long as the light lasted. The mine-sweepers had been brought up the Straits in order to clear the passage in front, and to look out for drift mines. An hour and a half after the *Bouvet* sank, the *Irresistible* turned out of the fighting line with a heavy list. She also had been struck by a mine, but she floated for more than an hour, and the destroyers took off nearly all her crew—a dangerous task, for they were the target all the time for Turkish fire. She sank at ten minutes to six, and a quarter of an hour later another drift-mine struck the *Ocean*.

The latter sank almost as quickly as the *Bouvet*, but the destroyers were on the alert, and saved



The Attack on the Narrows (2).

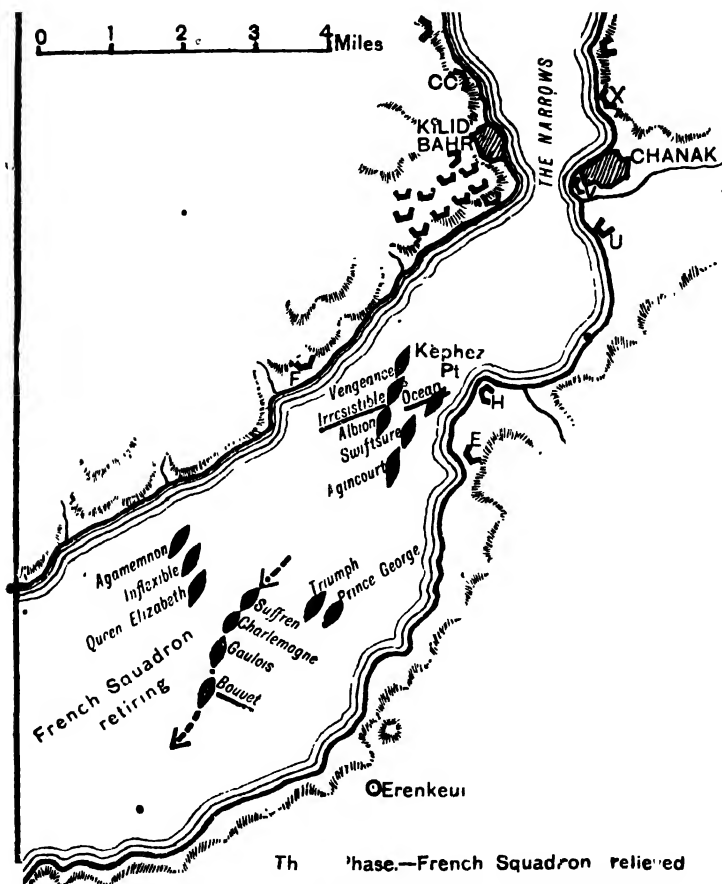
most of her crew. Several of the other ships had suffered damage and loss of life from the Turkish

guns. The *Gaulois* had been repeatedly hit, her upper works were seriously injured, and a huge rent had been torn in her bows. The *Inflexible* had been struck by a heavy shell, which killed and wounded the majority of the men and officers in her fire-control station, and set her on fire forward.

As the sun set most of the forts were still in action, and during the short twilight the Allied fleet slipped out of the Dardanelles. The great attack on the Narrows had failed—failed with the loss of three battleships and more than 2,000 men.

For more than a month the sea attack languished. Almost every day one or more ships entered the straits and opened fire to prevent the Turks repairing the entrance forts or establishing themselves in new positions. Mine-sweepers were also constantly at work, and had to be protected. On March 28th there was some activity at the other end of the passage, the Russian Black Sea fleet having bombarded the outer forts of the Bosphorus. On April 6th we again bombarded the Smyrna forts. Meantime our submarines had been busy, and on Saturday, April 17th, *E15* had the misfortune to ground in the Straits near Kephez Point. There was some danger of her falling into the enemy's hands in a serviceable condition, so on the Sunday night two picket-boats of the *Triumph* and the *Majestic*, under Lieutenant-Commander Eric Robinson, carried through a brilliant "cutting out" expedition. The boats were under heavy fire from the forts

200 yards off, and from numerous small guns at close range. Notwithstanding this, the submarine



Names of ships sunk  
are underlined.

The phase.—French Squadron relieved  
by a British division. Turks sending  
down drift mines. 1.45 p.m. to sunset.

### • The Attack on the Narrows (3).

was torpedoed and destroyed. The *Majestic* picket-boat was sunk, but the crew were saved

by the other boat, and the only casualty was one man, who died of his wounds.

During these weeks the naval attack was not pushed because the Allies had decided upon a different strategy. The events of March 18th had convinced the most optimistic that ships alone could never force the passage, and a combined movement by sea and land was now in train.



## CHAPTER VI

## THE LANDING AT GALLIPOLI

THE problem before the Allied Command was simple enough in its general lines. To master Gallipoli meant an assault from the Ægean, and the possible landing-places were few in number, small in extent, and clearly defined by the nature of the ground. Gaps must be found in the screen of yellow cliffs which fringe the sea. If we take the peninsula west of the line drawn north and south across the upper end of the Narrows, there were only two places where troops could be disembarked. One of these was the various beaches round about Sedd-el-Bahr and Cape Helles. The other was on the Gulf of Saros near Gaba Tepe, where the sandstone hills leave a narrow space at the water's edge. Neither was good, and both were believed by the Turkish Staff to be wholly impracticable. Nevertheless they left no stone unturned in their defence.

The mere landing of the Expeditionary Force would not effect much. The hills of the Gallipoli peninsula may be said to form a natural fortress defending the rear of the Narrows forts. It will be seen from the map that behind the point of Kilid Bahr a rocky plateau, which is more than 600 feet high, extends inland for some five miles. Its highest ridge runs up to the summits known

to the Turks as Pasha Dagħ. These hills are a salient with the point towards the Gulf of Saros, and the sides curving back to the Dardanelles above and below Kilid Bahr. North the high ground continues, and is pierced by a pass, through which a rough track runs from Krithia to the town of Maidos, on the channel opposite Nagara. •

But to an invader coming from the west and aiming at Maidos the Pasha Dagħ is not the only obstacle. West of it and South of Krithia rises the bold peak of Achi Baba, nearly 600 feet high, which sends out rocky spurs on both sides to the Dardanelles and the Gulf of Saros, and forms a barrier from sea to sea across the narrow western point of the peninsula. The failure of the great naval attack on March 18th had produced a wholly new situation. Whereas at first only a small expedition had been contemplated to secure the ground made untenable by the fleets, now an army to conquer the territory was required. The navy's task became subordinate and ancillary to that of the army.

The army must effect a landing at the apex of the peninsula and at Gaba Tepe, in the Gulf of Saros. It would then be the business of the force landed at the first point to fight its way to Krithia, and carry the Achi Baba ridge, while the second force would advance from Gaba Tepe against the pass leading to Maidos. It might then be possible for the left wing of the first to come in touch with the right wing of the second, and together to force the Pasha Dagħ plateau. If that

movement succeeded the battle was won. We could bring up the artillery to the plateau, which would make the European forts untenable. Moreover, we would dominate at short range the enemy's positions on the Asiatic side, and a combined attack by land and sea would give the Narrows to our hands.

The Expeditionary Force was assembled in Egypt during the first half of April. Sir Ian Hamilton, who had been appointed to the Supreme Command, had arrived at Tenedos on March 17th, but he found that the transports had been wrongly loaded, and had to send them back to Alexandria. Lemnos was chosen as the advanced base, and by the middle of the month the expedition began to arrive in the Bay of Mudros. Part of the force was landed on the island, and the rest remained on board the ships, where day and night, under the direction of naval officers, they practised the landing of men, horses and guns. Germany was well aware of our intentions, and on April 22nd published an announcement that 20,000 British and French troops had landed at Enos at the mouth of the Maritza, a place some sixty-four miles from Bulair by a bad road. This was a legend, but we experimented during these days in small landings and bombardments in the Gulf of Saros as feints to distract the enemy. Meanwhile, by April 20th Sir Ian Hamilton had perfected his plans, and the first attack was fixed for Sunday, April 25th.

That Sunday morning was one of those which delight the traveller in April in the Ægean. A

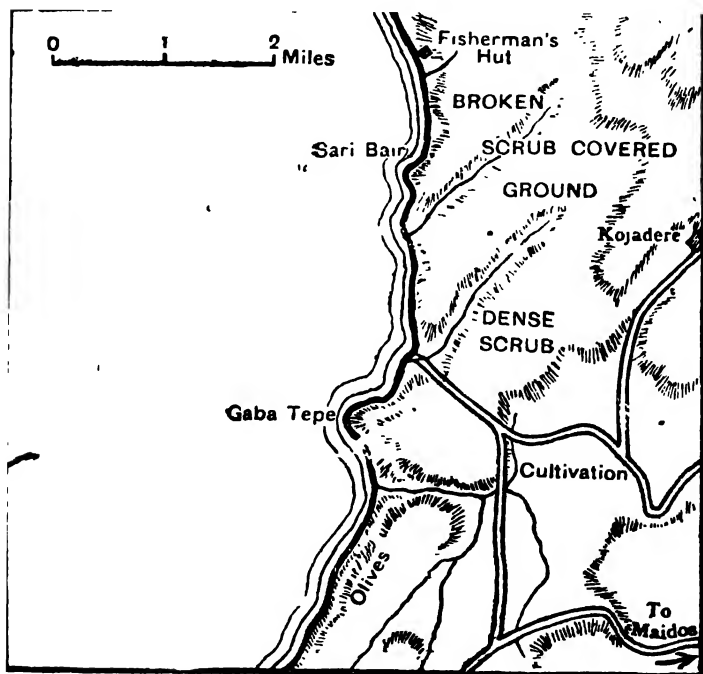
light mist fills the air before dawn, but it disappears with the sun, and all day there are clear skies, still seas, and the fresh, invigorating warmth of spring. A glance at the map will show the nature of the place chosen for the attempt. Gaba Tepe, on the north side of the peninsula, we have already described. Round the Cape Helles there are five little beaches. Beginning from the left there is Beach Y, and a little south of it, Beach X. Rounding Cape Tekke, we come to Beach W, where a narrow valley opens between the headlands of Tekeh and Helles. Here there is a broad, semi-circular stretch of sand. South of Helles is Beach V, a place of the same configuration as Beach W, but unpleasantly commanded by the castle and village of Sedd-el-Bahr at its southern end. Lastly, inside the Straits, on the east side of Morto Bay, is Beach S, close to the point of ~~Eski~~ Eski Hissar. The landing at Gaba Tepe was entrusted to the Australian and New Zealand troops; that at the Helles beaches to the 29th Division, with some units of the Naval Division. It was arranged simultaneously the French should land on the Asiatic shore at Kum Kale, to prevent the Turkish batteries from being brought into action against our men at Beaches V and S. Part of the Naval Division was detached for a feint farther north in the Gulf of Saros.

Let us assume that an aeroplane, which miraculously escaped the enemy's fire, enabled us to move up and down the shores of the peninsula and observe the progress of the different landings. About one in the morning the ships arrive at a

point five miles from the Gallipoli shores. At 1.20 the boats are lowered, and the troops line up on the decks. Then they embark in the flotillas, and the steam pinnaces begin to tow them shorewards in the hazy half-light before dawn. The Australians destined for Gaba Tepe are carried in the battleships *Queen*, *London*, and *Prince of Wales*, which take them in close to the shore. The battleships *Triumph* and *Majestic*, and the cruiser *Bacchante* stood by to cover the landing. The operations are timed to allow the troops to reach the beaches at daybreak. The naval force also included 8 destroyers, the seaplane carrier *Ark Royal*, 15 trawlers, and the balloon ship, *Manica*.

Slowly and very quietly the boats and destroyers steal in towards the land. A little before five an enemy's searchlight flares out. The boats are now in shallow water, under the Gaba Tepe cliffs, and the men are leaping ashore. Then comes a blaze of rifle fire from the Turkish trenches on the beach, and the first comers charge them with the bayonet. The whole cliff seems to leap into light, for everywhere trenches and caverns have been dug in the slopes. The fire falls most heavily on the men still in the boats, who have the difficult task of waiting as the slow minutes bring the 1 shoreward. The first Australians—the 3rd Brigade, under Colonel Sinclair MacLagan—do not linger. They carry the lines on the beach with cold steel, and find themselves looking up at a steep cliff a hundred feet high. In open order they dive into the scrub, and scramble up the loose yellow rocks. By a fortunate accident the

landing is farther north than we intended, just under the cliffs of Sari Bair. At Gaba Tepe the long slope would have given the enemy a great advantage in defence ; but here there is only the forty-foot beach and then the cliffs.



The Australian Landing near Gaba Tepe.

He who knows the Ægean in April will remember the revelation of those fringed sea walls and bare brown slopes. From a distance they look as arid as the Syrian desert, but when the traveller draws near he finds a paradise of curious and beautiful flowers—anemone, grape hyacinth,

rock rose, asphodel, and amaryllis. Up this rock garden the Australians race, among the purple cistus and the matted creepers and the thickets of myrtle. They have left their packs at the foot, and scale the bluffs like chamois. It is an achievement to rank with Wolfe's escalade of the Heights of Abraham. Presently they are at the top, and come under the main Turkish fire. But the ground gives good cover, and they set about entrenching the crest of the cliffs to cover the boats' landing. Below on the beach the naval men are coolly supervising the landing and evacuation of the wounded at the same time. With swiftness and precision the work went on while the soldiers were earning the first laurels on the cliffs. This is the position at Gaba Tepe at 7 a.m.

As we journey down the coast we come next to Beach Y. The landing at the southern end of the peninsula was carried out under Rear-Admiral R. E. Wemyss, and his force consisted of a battleship, 4 cruisers, 6 fleet sweepers, and 14 trawlers. There at 7 a.m. all is going well. The three cruisers, *Dublin*, *Amethyst*, and *Sapphire*, have covered the landing of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, and the Plymouth Battalion, who were speedily disembarked, and, under well-placed covering fire from the ships, reached the top of the cliffs without difficulty. At Beach X things are even better. The *Swiftsure* has plastered the high ground with shells, and the landing ship, the *Implacable*, has anchored close to the shore in six fathoms of water. Without a single casualty the 2nd Battalion Royal Fusiliers have gained the cliff line.

There has been a harder fight at Beach W, between Tekke and Helles, where the sands are broader. The shore is trenched throughout, and wired and mined almost to the water's edge, and in the scrub of the hinterland the Turkish snipers are hidden. The result is that, though our ships have bombarded the shore for three-quarters of an hour, they cannot clear out the enemy, and do not seem to have made much impression on the wire entanglements. The first troops landed to the right under the cliffs of Cape Helles and reached the top, while a party on the left scaled Cape Tekke. But the men of the Lancashire Fusiliers who landed on the shore itself had a fiery trial. They suffered heavily while still on the water, and on landing came up against unbroken lines of wire, while snipers in the valley in front and concealed machine-guns and quick-firers rained death on them. Here we have had heavy losses, a fierce battle is being waged and the boats' crews suffer heavily from snipers and from machine-gun fire as they continue their work of landing troops, guns, and stores.

But the case is more desperate still at Beach V, under Sedd-el-Bahr. Here, as at Beach W, there are a stretch of sand, a scrubby valley, and flanking cliffs. It is the strongest of the Turkish positions, and troops landing in boats are exposed to every type of converging fire. The foreshore was covered with wire entanglements which in places extended under the water. A curious expedient has been tried. A collier, the *River Clyde*, with 2,000 men of the Hampshires and



Munster Fusiliers on board, as well as eight boat-loads towed by steam pinnaces, approached close to the shore. The boat-loads—the Dublin Fusiliers—suffered horribly, for when they dashed through the shallows to the beach they were pinned to the ground by fire. Three lines of wire entanglements had to be forced, and a network of trenches. A bank of sand, five or six feet high, runs at the back, and under its cover the survivors have taken shelter. The steamer had been skilfully prepared under the direction of Commander E. Unwin. In its steel side doors have been cut, which opened and disgorged men, like some new Horse of Troy. But a tornado of shot and shell rained on her, and few of the 200 gallant men, who leaped from the lighters to the reef, and from the reef to the sea, reached the land.

Immediately after the boats had reached the beach the *River Clyde* was run ashore under a heavy fire. As she grounded the lighters which were to form the bridge were run out, but there was a gap between two of them. Commander Unwin thereupon, standing in the water to his waist under a heavy fire, got the lighter in position. He was assisted in his perilous undertaking by Midshipmen G. L. Drewry, R.N.R.; and W. St. A. Malleon, R.N., Able Seaman W. C. Williams, R.N., and Seaman George McKenzie Samson, R.N.R. The bridge was now continuous, but merely a deathtrap, owing to the terrible precision of the snipers. The men had to remain in the *River Clyde* till nightfall.

These five men, who were later granted the Victoria Cross, were the central figures of this stirring episode of the *River Clyde*. Commander Unwin had twice to desist from his self-imposed task owing to the effects of prolonged immersion; but, returning as soon as he had a little recovered, he forced the work through. Midshipman Drewry, though wounded in the head, twice attempted to swim with a line from lighter to lighter, and when he had failed a second time through exhaustion Midshipman Malleson took up the line and succeeded. Later it broke, and he swam with it twice more, but without achieving his purpose. Williams held on to a line in the water for more than an hour, when he was killed, and Samson was under fire all day coolly attending to the wounded.

At Beach S, in Morto Bay, all has gone well. Seven hundred men of the South Wales Borderers have been landed from trawlers, and have established themselves on the cliff tops at the place called De Totts Battery.

Let us go back to Gaba Tepe and look at the position at noonday. We are prospering there, for more than 10,000 men are now ashore, and the work of disembarking guns and stores goes on steadily, though the fire from inland is still deadly. We see a proof of it in a boat full of dead men which rocks idly in the surf. The great warships from the sea send their heavy shells against the Turkish lines, seaplanes are "spotting" for them, and wireless stations are being erected on the beach. Firing from the ships is not easy,

for the morning sun shines right in the eyes of the gunners. The Royal Engineers are making roads up the cliff, and supplies are climbing steadily to our firing line. On the turf on the cliff top our men are entrenched, and are working their way forward. Unfortunately the zeal of the Australians has outrun their discretion, and some of them have pushed too far on, looking for enemies to bayonet. They have crossed three ridges, and have got to a point above Eskikeui within sight of the Narrows. In that "pockety" country such an advance is certain death, and the rash attack has been pushed back with heavy losses. The wounded are being brought in, and it is no light task getting them down the cliffs on stretchers, and across the beach and the bullet-splashed sea to the warships. Remember that we are holding a position which is terribly conspicuous to the enemy, and all our ammunition and water and food have to be dragged up those breakneck cliffs. Still, the first round has been won, Indian troops are being landed in support, and we are firmly placed at Gaba Tepe.

As we move down the coast we find that all goes well at Beaches Y and X, and that the troops there are working their way forward. The *Implacable* has knocked out of action a Turkish battery at Krithia which gave much annoyance to our men at Beach X. At Beach W we have improved our position. We have cleared the beach and driven the Turks out of the scrub at the valley foot, and the work of disembarking men and stores is proceeding. Our right wing

—Worcesters and Lancashire Fusiliers—is working round by the cliffs above Cape Helles to try and enfilade the enemy who are holding Beach V, where our men are still in deadly jeopardy.

The scene at Beach V is strange and terrible. From the deep water the *Cornwallis* and *Albion* are trying to bombard the enemy at Sedd-el-Bahr, and the 15-inch shells from the *Queen Elizabeth* are screaming overhead. The Trojan Horse is still lying bow on against the reefs, with her 2,000 men unable to move, and the Turkish howitzers playing on her. If a man shows his head he is picked off by sharpshooters. The troops we have landed lie flat on the beach under cover of the sand ridge, unable to advance or retreat, and under a steady tornado of fire. The maxims on the *River Clyde* do their best to help these men by firing on the Turkish positions. Brigadier-General Napier has fallen, and Lieutenant-Colonel Carrington Smith, commanding the Hampshires. At Beach S things are satisfactory. Meantime the French landing at Kum Kale has achieved its purpose. Originally timed for 6 a.m., it did not take place till about 10 a.m. They had a skirmish with the Turks, partly on the height at Kum Kale, and partly on the Trojan plain. Then they advanced along the swell of ground near the coast as far as Yenai Sheri. Next evening they re-embarked, and joined our right wing at Beach S. They took 400 prisoners, and could have taken more had there been room for them in the boats. The Turk, who showed himself a dauntless fighter when fighting was the order of the day, surrendered

with great complaisance and good humour when the game was up. He had no crusading zeal in the business.

As darkness fell on that loud Sabbath, the minds of the Allied Staff may well have been anxious. We had gained a footing, but no more, and at the critical point it was but a precarious lodgment. The complexity and strength of the enemy's defence far surpassed our expectation. He had tunnelled the cliffs, and created a wonderful and intricate trench system, which took full advantage of the natural strength of the ground. The fire from our leviathans on the deep was no more effective against his entrenched positions than it had been against the forts of the Narrows.

Let us resume our tour of the beaches about 10 a.m. on the morning of the 26th. At Gaba Tepe the Australians are facing a counter-attack. It lasts for two hours, and is met by a great bombardment from our ships. A correspondent on one of the battleships has described the scene\*—

"The noise, smoke, and concussion produced was unlike anything you can even imagine until you have seen it. The hills in front looked as if they had suddenly been transformed into smoking volcanoes, the common shell throwing up great chunks of ground and masses of black smoke, whilst the shrapnel formed a white canopy above. Sections of ground were covered by each ship all around our front trenches, and, the ranges being known, the shooting was excellent. Nevertheless, a great deal of the fire was, of necessity, indirect, and the ground affords such splendid cover that the Turks continued their advance in a most gallant manner, whilst their

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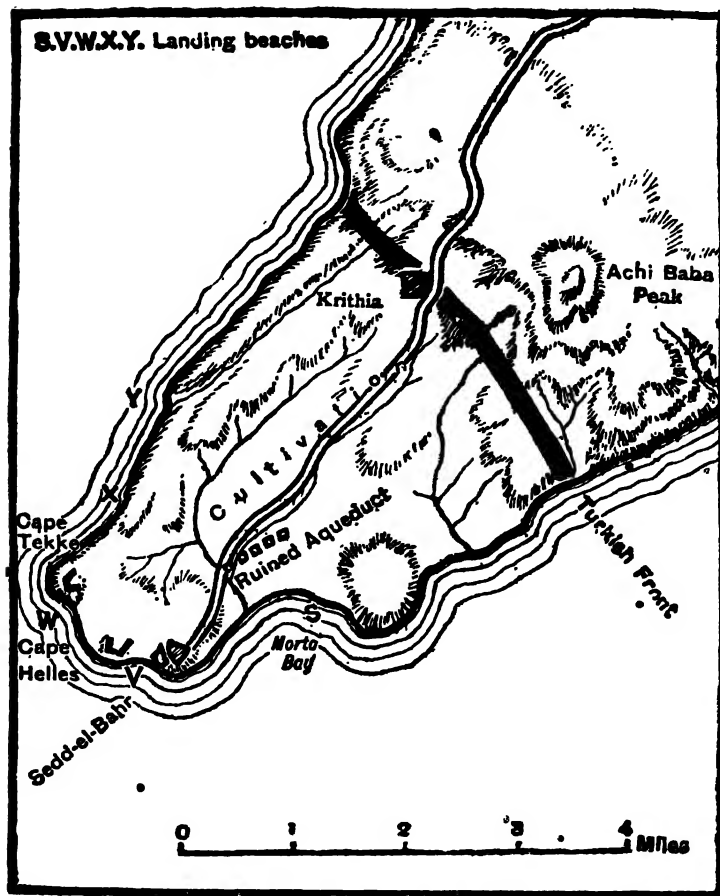
\* *Times*, May 7th.

artillery not only plastered our positions on shore with shrapnel, but actually tried to drive the ships off the coast by firing at them, and their desperate snipers, in place of a better target, tried to pick off officers and men on the decks and bridges. We picked up many bullets on the decks afterwards. . . . On shore the rifle and machine-gun fire was incessant, and at times rose into a perfect storm as the Turks pressed forward their attack. The hills were ablaze with shells from the ships and the enemy's shrapnel, whilst on the beach masses of troops were waiting to take their places in the trenches, and the beach parties worked incessantly at landing stores and material and ammunition."

The end comes when the Australians and New Zealanders counter-attack with the bayonet, and drive back the enemy. But all that day there is no rest for our troops, who are perfecting their trenches under a deluge of shrapnel.

At Beach Y things have gone badly. Our men there had advanced during the Sunday afternoon and had been outflanked and driven back to the cliff edge. The Scottish Borderers lost their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Koe, and more than half their men. It was decided to re-embark there, and as we pass the retreat is going on successfully under cover of the ships' fire. At Beach X there has been a hard struggle. Last night we were strongly attacked there, and driven to the very edge of the cliffs, where we hung on in rough shelter trenches. This morning we are advancing again, and making some way. At Beach W, too, there has been a counter-attack. Yesterday afternoon our right wing there, which tried to relieve the position on Beach V by an enfilading attack on the enemy, got among wire

and were driven back. During the night the Turks came on in force, and we were compelled



The Landing Beaches.

to fling our beach parties into the firing line, bluejackets and sappers, armed with whatever weapons they could find. This morning the

situation is easier, we have landed more troops, and are preparing to move forward.

At Beach V the landing is still in its first stage. Men are still sheltering on the deadly beach behind the sand bank. We have gained some positions among the ruins which were once Sedd-el-Bahr, but not enough to allow us to proceed. Even as we look a final effort is beginning, in which the Dublin Fusiliers and the Munster Fusiliers distinguish themselves, though it is hard to select for special praise among the splendid battalions of the 29th Division. It continues all morning, most gallantly directed by Lieutenant-Colonel Doughty Wylie of the Headquarters Staff, and Captain Welford of the Royal Artillery,\* and about 2 p.m. it is successful. The main Turkish trenches are carried, the debris of the castle and village are cleared, and the enemy retreat. The landing can now go forward, and the men, who for thirty-two hours have been huddled behind the sand bank, enduring torments of thirst and a nerve-racking fire, can move their cramped limbs and join their comrades.

By the morning of Tuesday, the 27th, all the beaches—except Beach Y, which had been relinquished—were in working order, and the advance could proceed. On that day the *Queen Elizabeth* was informed by a seaplane that a Turkish transport was coming down the Straits. She sank it in three shots, fired over a range of

\* Both officers received the Victoria Cross, and both fell in the moment of victory.



hills at a distance of nine miles. That day the Turkish gunners attempted to put a barrage of fire between the ships and the shore, but in spite of it the work of landing supplies went on swiftly. To quote the same correspondent :—

“ The whole scene on the beach irresistibly reminds you of a gigantic shipwreck. It looks as if the whole army with its stores had been washed ashore after a great gale or had saved themselves on rafts. All this work is carried on under an incessant shrapnel fire which sweeps the trenches and hills. The shells are frequently bursting ten or twelve at the same moment, making a deafening noise and plastering the foreshore with bullets. The only safe place is close under the cliff, but every one is rapidly becoming accustomed to the shriek of the shells and the splash of the bullets in the water, and the work goes on as if there was not a gun within miles.”

That night our position on the peninsula ran from Eski Hissarlik on the Straits north-west to a point on the Gulf of Saros, 3,200 yards north-east of Cape Tekke. The dispositions from left to right were the 29th Division, four French battalions, and the South Wales Borderers. There was too little room for so large a force, and an advance was ordered for the 28th.

Our main objective was Krithia village, and we found our road stoutly opposed. Our front was the 87th Brigade on the left, the 88th Brigade in the centre, and the French Brigade on the right, with the 86th Brigade in reserve. In such a country a line has a tendency to “ bunch ” and become too thin in places. The result was that our progress was irregular, and under the strong Turkish counter-attacks we were too weak to

hold all we won. The 87th Brigade advanced two miles, and this was the maximum we were able to make good, though parties of the 88th Brigade got within a few hundred yards of Krithia village, and the French to within a mile. Still, by that evening we had securely won the apex of the peninsula, and our front ran from three miles north-west of Cape Tekke to a mile north of Eski Hissarlik. An incident of that fight deserves to be recorded. A Turkish attack was made on our left, at a point which the nature of the ground hid from the threatened troops. It was observed by the *Queen Elizabeth* far out on the sea, and a 15-inch shell was dropped right in the midst of the attacking party. It was a shrapnel shell, weighing 1,800 pounds, and holding 13,000 bullets. The attack was literally blotted out, 250 Turks being killed.

—So ended the first stage in the Gallipoli campaign—the Battle of the Landing. It is a fight without a precedent. There have been landings—such as Abercromby's at Aboukir—fiercely contested landings, in our history, but none on a scale like this. Sixty thousand men, backed by the most powerful Navy in the world, attacked a shore which nature seemed to have made impregnable, and which was held by at least twice that number of the enemy, in positions prepared for months, and supported by the latest modern artillery. The mere problem of transport was sufficient to deter the boldest. Every rule of war was set at naught. On paper the thing was impossible, as the Turkish Army Order announced.

By the text-books no man should have left the beaches alive. In Sir Ian Hamilton's words, it "involved difficulties for which no precedent was forthcoming in military history." Remember that we were fighting against a gallant enemy who was at his best in defence and in this unorthodox type of battle. All accounts prove that the Turks fought with superlative boldness and courage—with chivalry,\* too, as their treatment of our wounded showed. That our audacity succeeded is a tribute to the unsurpassable fighting quality of our men—the Regulars and Territorials of the 29th Division, the Naval Division, to the dash and doggedness of the Australasian corps. And not least to the splendid efficiency and heroism of the naval men. The framework upon which the plan was built was the navy. No bravery of the soldiers could have compensated for any faltering on the part of the sailors, often the youngest officers, who were in charge of the boats' parties and of the disembarkation generally. Whatever be the judgment of posterity on its policy or its consequences, the Battle of the Landing will be acclaimed as a mighty feat of arms.

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\* Some atrocities were committed by an Arab battalion, but all the evidence shows that the Turks were punctilious in observing the etiquette of war towards the wounded.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE NAVY IN SUPPORT

**S**IR IAN HAMILTON, in paying tribute to the work of the navy in the Dardanelles campaign, well said that it was father and mother to the Army. Its work neither began nor ended with the heroic battles of the landing, and, a footing gained, its rôle became more complex and necessary. It supplied us with mobile batteries on the flanks of the invading army, able to take the Turkish lines in enfilade, and to cover every attempt to advance; and it was perforce the guard to the Allies' communications. Reinforcement and supply were impossible without the daily service of the navy, and to advance against such strongly entrenched positions would have been plain folly without the assistance of its guns.

To follow all the doings of the navy in the Dardanelles campaign would therefore be like the task of recording the work of the artillery of any given sector. Its support was continual, and likewise its preservation of the communications was so complete as to be almost without incident. We can do no more than state this in general and illustrate the character and hazards of the navy's work by sample.

In the second battle of Krithia, which opened

on 6th May, naval vessels assisted, first one by one, and then, as the struggle worked up, together. At 5.15 p.m. all the available ships and the shore batteries united in a terrific bombardment. From the report of an observer, the Turkish position was smothered in flame and smoke. "According to all preconceived theories of artillery fire, the enemy should have been wiped out, and so stunned by the exploding lyddite that he would not be capable of resisting the advance of our infantry. Not a Turk was to be seen, and their artillery had not fired a shot." Once again we were to learn the strength of scientifically-prepared entrenchments. At 5.30 our advance began, and no sooner did we move than the Turks opened fire along the whole front with artillery, machine guns and rifles, and little ground was gained.

The fleet shared in every land attack, and the *Goeben*, on the Turkish side, from farther up the Straits, took part in at least one engagement. These large vessels, stationary or moving very slowly along the coasts, were a superb target for under-water assault, and presently news came that some of the large ocean-going German submarines, which had been commissioned early in the year, were on their way to the Mediterranean. About the middle of May one was reported near Malta, and there were many spots on the long indented Anatolian coast where they could find a base.

This possibility gave much anxiety to the Allied Admirals. Meantime, on the night of 12th May, a Turkish destroyer performed a singu-

larly bold feat on its own account. It found the old British battleship, the *Goliath*,\* protecting the French flank just inside the Straits, sunk it by torpedo fire, with a loss of the captain, 19 officers and 500 men, and managed to return safely. Such an exploit was only possible under cover of darkness, and the risk of it did not interfere with the daylight operations of the fleet. But presently a far more formidable foe arrived, a foe whose presence made naval support—so far at least as concerned the great battleships—a very doubtful and costly undertaking.

About midday on 26th May the *Triumph* was moving slowly up the northern shore of the peninsula in support of the Australasian troops. Apparently her nets were out, and there were destroyers close at hand. A torpedo from a German submarine tore through the nets, struck the vessel amidships, and sank her in nine minutes. Nearly all the officers and men were saved, and the submarine was chased unsuccessfully by the destroyers. Here was an incident to give serious thought. The enemy in broad daylight, in water full of shipping, had broken through all our safeguards, and destroyed a battleship. The hunt for the submarine—there seems at the moment to have been only one—was vigorously conducted, but nothing was heard of it till next day, when the *Majestic*, steaming very close to the shore, was sunk in the same fashion.

\* Built in 1900; 12,950 tons, 19 knots, four 12-inch, and twelve 6-inch guns.

The Allied fleets, compelled by the necessities of gunnery to move slowly, were obviously at the mercy of an enemy under water. From this date, therefore, the larger vessels began to withdraw. The *Queen Elizabeth* returned home, and there remained only a few of the older battleships, a number of cruisers, French and British, like the *Euryalus*, *Minerva*, *Talbot*, *Phæton*, *Amethyst*, and *Kleber*; and a flotilla of destroyers, including the *Scorpion*, *Wolverine*, *Pincher*, *Renard*, and *Chelmer*. In addition we had the *Humber*, one of the monitors which had operated in October off the Flanders coast—a type of vessel whose shallow draught made it most suitable for coast bombardment and least vulnerable to submarine attack.

The strength of the Gallipoli position and the menace of the German submarines had turned the operations in the Eastern Mediterranean into some of the most difficult of the war.

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While we were battling against the outer walls of the Turkish fortifications we did not neglect the duty of striking at the routes of supply. The work of our submarines in the Marmora continued, and there is no question but that we hampered and occasionally held up both munitions and reinforcements. At the same time the complete closing of the Marmora, even had we accomplished it, would not have cut Turkish communications, as was too readily assumed in some quarters at the time. A brief examination of Turkey's

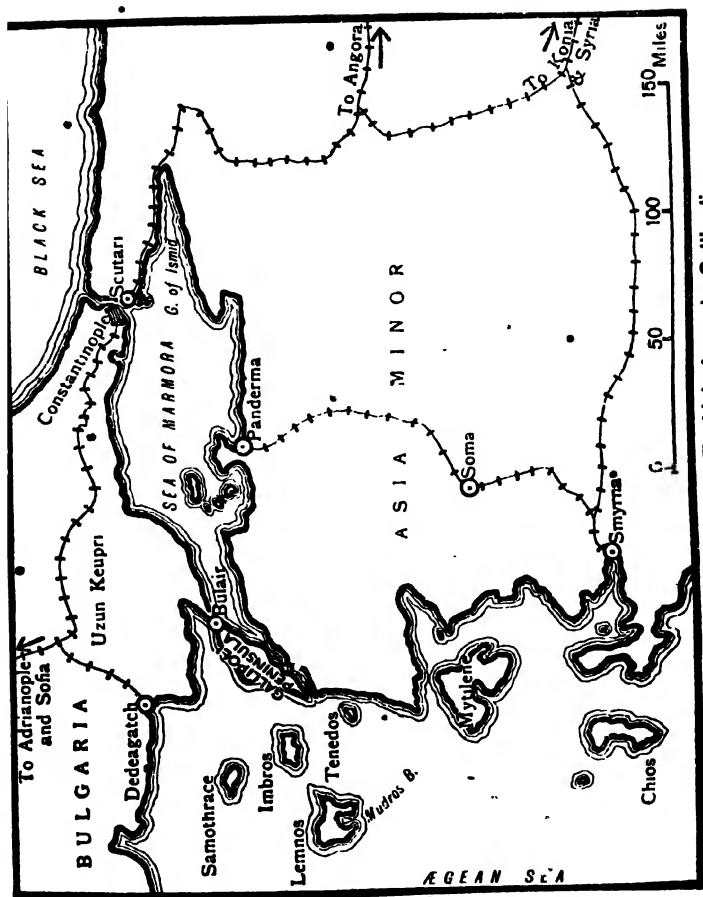
transport problem is necessary for a proper understanding of the situation.

Turkey had three possible passages to her Gallipoli position. She could send troops and supplies by sea all the way from Constantinople to the ports of Maidos and Gallipoli. She could send them by rail through Thrace to Uzun Keupru, whence a fair military road would carry them to the peninsula by way of Bulair. For troops the distance from railhead was perhaps forty-eight hours' march ; for heavy transport, by means of oxen and buffalo carts, it would mean a journey of some five days. At Bulair, it is true, the road was open to our naval guns ; but in dry weather the wagons could leave the path and find a more sheltered cross-country route. Finally, troops and supplies could travel by the Anatolian and Ottoman railways via Smyrna and Soma to the port of Panderma, in the south-western half of the Marmora. Most of the reinforcements came from Syria and Anatolia ; and they naturally used the Panderma line, embarking at that port for the short sea journey to Gallipoli in the Bosphorus passenger steamers which were used as transports. Heavy material, such as shells and guns, either used the through sea route from Constantinople, or were railed down to Smyrna and back to Panderma.

Our submarines made the Marmora road nearly impossible. They also interfered gravely with the short sea voyage from Panderma to the Peninsula. Turkey was accordingly flung back more and more upon her land routes,—by rail to



1915]



Lines of Supply of the Turkish Army in Gallipoli.

Uzun Keupru and thence to Bulair, and by rail to Panderma, and thence by road to the port of Lapsaki, on the Dardanelles, opposite Galata. This was a real inconvenience, but it was by no means an insuperable difficulty. Since most of the fresh troops came from Asia, Panderma was the natural point of arrival, and the farther road to Lapsaki was easy. Nor was the route so bad for shells and heavy material which came from Constantinople, for a good railway system took them to Smyrna, and the railway journey from Smyrna to Panderma occupied no more than nine hours, while there was the Uzun Keupru-Bulair road as an alternative. Our submarine warfare, brilliant as it was, hampered and delayed, but it did not cut, or perhaps seriously cripple, the communications of the Turkish fortress.

How audacious and devoted the warfare was may be gathered from the exploit of Lieutenant Guy D'Oyly-Hughes, R.N., who on 21st August made a single-handed attempt to cut the first section of the Anatolian railway, which runs along the northern shore of the Gulf of Ismed, at the eastern end of the Marmora. He swam ashore from a submarine, pushing a raft carrying his clothes and explosives. Finding the cliffs unclimbable, he had to prospect along the coast till he found a point which could be scaled. He then moved towards the railway line, but discovered that it was strongly guarded. At first his idea was to destroy the viaduct; but finding this impossible, he resolved to blow up a low brickwork support over a small hollow. The sound of the

fuse pistol brought up the guards, and Lieutenant D'Oyly-Hughes had to retire, fighting a running fight for about a mile. From this point we may quote the official account :—

“ He plunged into the water about three-quarters of a mile to the eastward of the small bay in which the boat was lying. The charge exploded as he entered the water, fragments falling into the sea near the boat, although the distance between the boat and the charge was between a quarter and half a mile. After swimming for four or five hundred yards straight out to sea, he blew a long blast on his whistle ; but the boat, being in a small bay behind the cliffs, did not hear it.

“ Day was breaking very rapidly, so after swimming back to the shore, and resting for a short time on the rocks, he commenced swimming towards the bay in which the boat was lying. At this point he discarded his pistol, bayonet, and electric torch, their weight making his progress very slow. It was not until he had rounded the last point that the whistle was heard, and at the same time he heard shots from the cliffs overhead, and rifle fire was opened on the boat.

“As the boat came astern out of the bay the early morning mist made her appear to him to be three rowing boats—the bow, the gun, and the conning tower being the three objects actually seen. He swam ashore, and tried to hide under the cliffs ; but on climbing a few feet out of the water he realized his mistake, and shouted again before entering the water. We picked him up in an extremely exhausted condition about forty yards from the rocks, after he had swum the best part of a mile in his clothes.” \*

The work of the Navy was not confined to below the water. The appearance of German

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\* Lieutenant D'Oyly-Hughes received the Distinguished Service Order.

submarines in the middle of May compelled us to keep our large transports at Mudros. From Lemnos to the peninsula was forty miles, and all troops and stores had to be brought in fleet sweepers, trawlers, drifters, and other small craft which were least vulnerable to submarine attack. Apart from the good work done by the naval guns in the land battle, the mere transport services of the ships could not be overstated. Take the work of the picket-boats, the steam pinnaces which towed the laden lighters to the beaches. Their crews were often at work for sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, and were constantly under fire.

Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett has drawn an interesting picture of this strenuous and well-ordered activity.

“The line of demarcation between the authority of the Army and of the Navy is strictly drawn. As long as a soldier, a horse, a gun, or a biscuit is in a ship or in a lighter on its way to the shore, all are under the control of our beach parties. Standing on one of the piers in the sweltering heat of the last few days, with the beach behind him crammed with men, stores, and animals, a young officer, with a megaphone in his hand, shouts orders to a dozen different lighters, each towed by a steam pinnace, in the offing. One contains mules, another guns, a third biscuits, a fourth tinned meat, a fifth ammunition, a sixth troops, a seventh generals and staff officers. Every one is directed to its right destination as if by some enchanter's wand, and no one dares to step ashore until he has received his orders. At the end of the pier the naval authority ceases and that of the army begins. Here are the Army Service Corps officers, who are waiting to seize what the Navy has brought them. The thousand

miscellaneous articles, which look as if they never could be sorted out, are speedily divided, checked, and sent on their way down the lines of communication to the troops in the front trenches. The whole is a marvel of organization."

\* \* \* \*

By the end of July preparations had been made for a final effort against the Gallipoli defences. Three divisions of the New Army, and two Territorial Divisions had arrived in the Eastern Mediterranean, and a Mounted Division had been for some months in Egypt. The submarine menace had sent the monsters of the British fleet back to home waters or to the shelter of protected harbours, and during the summer only the destroyers, a few light cruisers, and an occasional battleship were seen off the shores of the peninsula. But in July new craft arrived, specially constructed to meet the case. A strange type of monitor, with a freeboard almost flush with the water, and looking, as one observer reported, more like a Chinese pagoda than a ship, suddenly appeared in the northern Ægean. They were of different sizes, the smaller being little more than floating gun-platforms; but they were admirably suited for their purpose. Even the little ones, with a crew of seventy, could fling 100 lb. of high explosive twelve miles, and they feared submarines no more than a gull fears a swordfish. The preliminaries of the new assault on the naval side were prepared.

In the beginning of August the Fast of Ramadan was drawing to its close, and for a little there had been something like stagnation in the opposing lines. We were aware that the

Turks were massing forces for a new attack, and were resolved to anticipate them. The plan we adopted involved four separate actions. In the first place a feint was to be made at the head of the Gulf of Saros, as if to take in flank and rear the Bulair lines. Next a strong offensive would be assumed by the troops in the Cape Helles region against their old objective, Achi Baba. These two movements would be read by the Turks as the main British offensive and its covering feint, and it was hoped would lead them to send their reserves to Krithia. But in the meantime the Anzac Corps were to advance with its left and attempt to gain the heights of Koja Chemen and the seaward ridges. Simultaneously, a great new landing would be made at Suvla Bay, where it was believed the Turks would be wholly unprepared. Suvla Bay had the advantage that it ~~was~~ well sheltered from the prevailing winds, and afforded a submarine-proof base. If the Anafarta hills could be taken, and the right of the new landing force linked up with the left of the Australasians, the British would hold the central crest of the spine of upland which runs through the western end of the peninsula. Such gains would enable them to cut the communications of the Turks in the butt-end, Achi Baba must fall, and in time the frowning tableland of the Pasha Dagh. The one land route to Maidos would be commanded, and the way would be prepared for an action in open country, where the grim Turkish fortifications would be taken in flank and in reverse. If the undertaking attained a reason-

able success, the western end of the peninsula would be ours, and the European defences of the Narrows would be won.

The part of the navy in this enterprise is made clear by Sir Ian Hamilton. "The sheet anchor on which hung the whole of these elaborate schemes was the navy. One tiny flaw in the perfect mutual trust and confidence animating the two services would have wrecked the whole enterprise. Experts at a distance may have guessed as much; it was self-evident to the rawest private on the spot. But with men like Vice-Admiral de Robeck, Commodore Roger Keyes, Rear-Admiral Christian, and Captain F. H. Mitchell at our backs, we soldiers were secured against any such risk, and it will be seen how perfect was the precision the sailors put into their job."

### *The Landing at Suvla*

The force destined for Suvla Bay under Lieutenant-General Sir F. W. Stopford, was for the most part the new Ninth Corps. It consisted of two divisions of the New Army—the 10th (Irish), under Major-General Sir Bryan Mahon, less one brigade; the 11th (Northern), under Major-General Hammersley; and two Territorial Divisions, the 53rd and 54th. All day of the 6th the 11th Division was busy embarking at Kephalos Bay, in Imbros, each man being given rations and water for two days. When the ships set sail after dusk it was to a destination unknown to all save the Staff. The 11th Division were

ferried across from Imbros in destroyers and motor lighters to lead off the landing. About 9.30 p.m. the ships, showing no light, entered the little Bay of Suvla, four miles north of the main Anzac position. The night was dark, for the moon did not rise till two o'clock, but the weather was calm.

The enemy had no inkling of our plan. That day we made a pretence of landing at Karachali, at the head of the Gulf of Saros, on the coast road from Enos to Bulair. That day, too, the attack at Cape Helles and Lone Pine had begun, and the enemy's attention was diverted to the extreme ends of his front. We are justified therefore in claiming the Suvla Expedition as a successful surprise. As the transports crept northwards the New Zealanders, on the dark shore to starboard, were already moving along their saps, and before the landing was well begun the firing had started where the Mounted Brigades were clearing the foothills. But at Suvla there was no sign of life, till search-lights from the Anafarta slopes, in their periodic sweeping of the horizon, discovered the strange flotilla, and an intermittent rifle fire broke out upon the beach.

Three landing-places had been selected—A, north of the Salt Lake, and B and C, south-west of it. Destroyers were allocated to each landing-place, each destroyer having a steam lighter and a picket-boat. These latter were slipped, as the shore was approached, and discharged on to the beach. The motor lighters were new craft, which moved at five knots, carrying 500 men with stores,



ammunition, and water. Ketches with service launches and transport lifeboats followed the destroyers, anchoring at the entrance of the bay to assist in case of accidents or delays to any one of the motor lighters, and in evacuating the wounded.

H.M.S. *Endymion* and H.M.S. *Theseus*, each carrying a thousand men, sailed from Imbros after the destroyers, and discharged troops into the motor lighters which then began transporting guns, stores, mules, etc.

The following craft brought up the rear :—

(1) Two ketches, each towing four horse-boats, carrying four 18-pounder guns and twenty-four horses.

(2) One ketch, towing horse-boats with forty horses.

(3) The sloop *Aster*, with 500 men, towing a lighter containing eight mountain guns.

(4) Three ketches, towing horse-boats containing eight 18-pounder guns and seventy-six horses.

Water-lighters, towed by a tank steamer, were also timed to arrive at A Beach at daylight. When they had been emptied they were to return at once to Kephalos to refill from the parent water-ship.

Some of them ran aground some distance from the shore, and men had to wade breast-high through the water. They were guided by ropes as they stumbled on to the beach with their heavy kits.

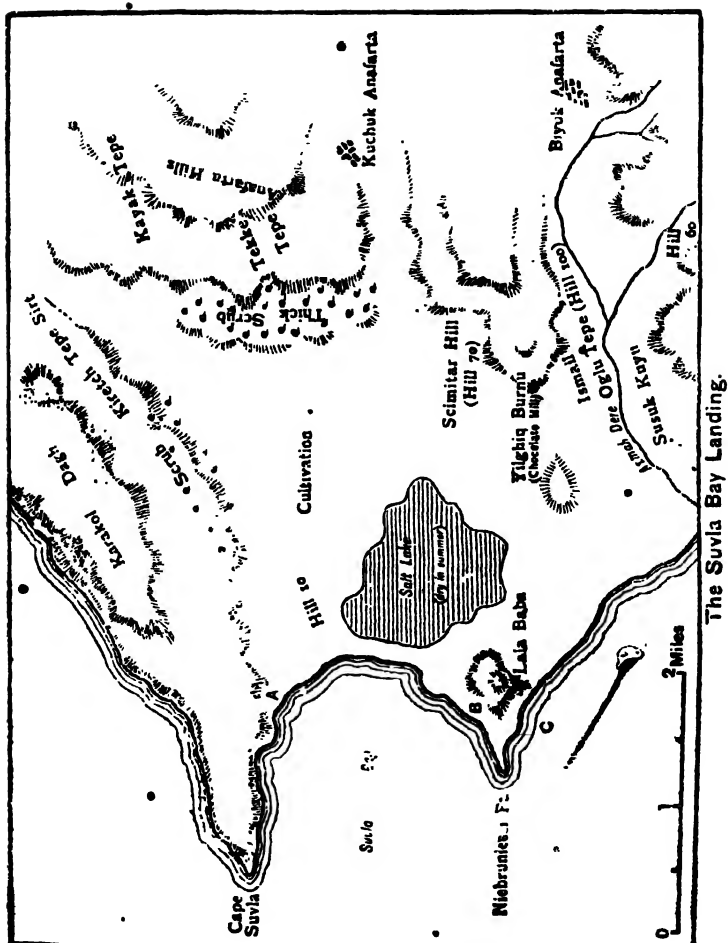
All night long the work of disembarkation

went on. The 32nd and 33rd Brigades landed at B and C, and the 34th at A. Opposite B and C was a little hill called Lala Baba, held by the enemy. It was readily carried with the bayonet by the 9th West Yorks and 6th Yorkshires, and for the rest of the night our only trouble was from scattered snipers in the scrub. The 34th Brigade had some difficulties at A with a Turkish outpost on Hill 10, but with the assistance of the 32nd Brigade they pushed northward and carried the ridge of Karakol Dag. At dawn on the 7th a remarkable feat had been accomplished.

The whole of the 11th Division was ashore, and held both sides of the bay and the neck of land between them. At daybreak six battalions of the 10th Division arrived in the bay from Mitylene. It was General Stopford's intention to use the 10th Division on his left, but for some reason not yet clear the troops could not be landed at A Beach, but were landed at C, and marched slowly northwards along the coast. Presently the remaining three battalions of the Division arrived from Mudros along with General Sir Bryan Mahon.

It was now necessary to deploy into the plain and take up a broad front east of the Salt Lake. The earliest light brought the Turkish artillery into action. At first we heard only the guns of the New Zealanders, now far up on the slopes of Chunuk Bair. Then suddenly a storm of shrapnel broke on the beaches, which burst too high to do much damage, while the ordinary shells buried themselves in the sand. The 10th

1915]



Division, in perfect order, moved along the causeway to the north end of the lake, while a field battery which we had established on Lala Baba provided a useful support. At the same time the cruisers, monitors, and destroyers in the bay made good practice against the Turkish batteries on the heights. By two o'clock, with few casualties, the two divisions—the 10th on the left—held a line east of the lake running from the Karakol Dagħ to near the butt-end of the ridge called Yilghin Burnu. So far the operation had been conducted with perfect precision and success.

But despite this competent beginning and the unnumbered exploits of soldiers and sailors that went to accomplish so fine an achievement, despite also the brilliant and heroic fighting of the Anzac troops, the new plan failed of its effect. General Stopford's blow completely miscarried, and with that failure all the rest came to naught. The Anzacs had to put all their daring and ingenuity into the struggle.

“ Amongst other stratagems, assisted by H.M.S. *Colne*, they had long and carefully been educating the Turks how they should lose Old No. 3 Post, which could hardly have been rushed by simple force of arms. Every night, exactly at 9 p.m. H.M.S. *Colne* threw the beams of her searchlight on to the redoubt, and opened fire upon it for exactly 10 minutes. Then, after 10 minutes' interval, came a second illumination and bombardment, commencing always at 9.20, and ending precisely at 9.30 p.m.

“ The idea was that, after successive nights of

such practice, the enemy would get into the habit of taking the searchlight as a hint to clear out until the shelling was at an end. But on the eventful night of the 6th, the sound of their footsteps drowned by the loud cannonade, unseen as they crept along in that darkest shadow which fringes a searchlight's beam—came the right covering column. At 9.30 the light switched off, and instantly our men poured out of the scrub jungle and into the empty redoubt. By 11 p.m. the whole series of surrounding entrenchments were ours."

On the 8th there had been still a chance. On the following day it had almost vanished, and we were settling down to a war of positions. In another day it had gone. A further attack was made before the end of the month, but it never had any real possibility of success.

The bitter prospect of evacuation soon rose upon the horizon. Winter was coming, when contrary winds would make the task of supplying the Gallipoli lines extraordinarily difficult. New operations were projected in the Near East, and in view of these the Gallipoli campaign dwindled in importance. At length the decision to evacuate was come to, and under Sir Charles Monro it was carried out with the same brilliance that had characterized the various landings. The Turks apparently had no suspicion of what was afoot. Heavy guns were removed in broad daylight. The whole process of evacuation from Suvla occupied ten days, but the main body of troops was withdrawn in two nights, finishing on December

20th, a day earlier than had been anticipated. If it had been a day later it would have been gravely impeded by the weather. Stormy weather had fallen on 9th January also, when the final evacuation of the peninsula was carried out. A few tons of explosives and stores were fired, and beside these there were only some seventeen worn out and useless guns that were not removed. With the exception of 130 men killed and wounded in an action on 7th January, there were no casualties in the evacuation. Surely this was, as Sir Charles Monro said, "an achievement without parallel in the annals of war," and although the full particulars of the evacuation are not yet known, its success was chiefly due to the Navy, which had organized the landing, covered its operations when landed, and kept it in being during the whole period.

## CHAPTER VIII

## CONVOY AND COASTAL OPERATIONS

**A** SUPREME navy will ensure the freedom of a nation's sea communications. Tested by such a standard the British navy was assured of supremacy from the outset of the war, and its power was never seriously limited until the launching of the unrestricted submarine campaign in February, 1917, imposed a check on the Allies' liberty of movement. But the fact that by that time all the German colonial possessions had been reduced to a precarious hold upon a malarial area in German East Africa is a sufficient testimony to the freedom and security with which the Allies had hitherto moved troops and supplies across the seas.

No expeditionary force could ever have left British shores if the navy had not ensured the safety of its passage. And if we reflect upon the vast movements of troops alone we can gather some idea of the reasonableness of the confidence which inspired the navy. After the departure of the original Expeditionary Force for France the stream of troops across the sea highways never died down. The Indian expeditionary force was despatched to France, to the Persian Gulf, to Egypt. Australian and New Zealand troops were landed in Egypt, in England, in France. Imperial

troops were brought from India and Burma, and British troops were sent to take their place. Bodies of troops were sent to the various German colonies from Nigeria, from India, from South Africa. Australian and New Zealand troops were sent to clear the German Pacific Colonies. Canadian troops were brought to England and France. In January, 1917, Sir John Jellicoe stated that over 7,000,000 men had been convoyed across the seas. And considering the volume of such traffic the losses were inappreciable, in spite of every effort of the German navy, including the submarines and mines.

The troops, moreover, had to be supplied with all the necessities of a fighting unit, and sometimes even all the necessities of life. Horses, guns, ammunition, pontoons, engineering material, medical stores, were carried across the seas with the same immunity as the troops. Foodstuffs had generally to be provided for the Colonial expeditions, and in South-West Africa much of the water. A great proportion of the guns and gun material, of munitions and their components, had also to be transferred from distant places, from America to England, from Japan to Russia, from England to Russia. Any figures that would accurately represent this huge and increasing traffic would be incomprehensible from their magnitude.

The navy was therefore the necessary scaffolding upon which the whole of the Allied plan of the war was built. If it had been withdrawn, or if the relative positions of the German and British navies had been the opposite of what they were



there could have been only one result to the war. And the smoothness of working of this powerful machine must not blind us to the universality of its effect. Its work was for the most part done in secret. If it had not been for the institution of Prize of War there would have been even less known. In the sittings of the Prize Court the veil of secrecy was drawn aside now and then, and the public had a glimpse of episodes that had taken place some time before, and would have been undisclosed to the end of the war but for the legal proceedings. In suits for prize money or prize bounty many a stirring act was described ; but it is just that we should realise that these were only the actions in which success in the capture or destruction of enemy vessels was attained. The Navy had no lack of incident in its work.

- The Pacific Colonies were seized as a result of small expeditions from Australia, New Zealand, and Japan assisted by the navy. The Australian Squadron, assisted by the China Squadron, patrolled the Pacific for German cruisers. The initial attack was made on Samoa. On 15th August, 1914, a New Zealand Expeditionary Force, some 1,500 strong, left Wellington in troopships, and sailed for Samoa under the escort of H.M.S. *Australia*, H.M.S. *Melbourne*, and the French cruiser *Montcalm*. On 28th August it reached Apia, and the commanding officer, Colonel Logan took possession of the Islands without resistance. The German officials came in, and swore fealty, and were confirmed in their posts.

Then came the turn of New Pomerania, which had already been reconnoitred. On 11th September, 1914, an expeditionary force arrived at Herbertshohe, the port at the north-eastern extremity of the island. A party of sailors, under Commander J. A. H. Beresford, landed at dawn, and proceeded through the bush towards the wireless station. The advance was not unopposed, for the Germans seem to have concentrated here most of the troops which they possessed in their New Guinea Protectorate. In several places the road was mined, while rifle pits had been dug along the edge, and snipers placed in the neighbouring trees. The sailors fought their way for six miles to the wireless station, where the German defence surrendered. Our casualties were ten officers and four seamen, and the whole German force fell into our hands. At the same time the ports of Herbertshohe and Simpsonhafen, and the capital, Rabaul, were occupied without trouble. Two days later our troops sailed for the Solomon Islands, and secured without difficulty the surrender of Bougainville. We then turned our attention to Kaiser Wilhelm's Land, where we expected a more serious opposition. But again we won a bloodless victory. The British flag was hoisted in Friedrich Wilhelmshafen, and a garrison left behind. The Australian navy had done its work with admirable precision and dispatch, covering great distances in a very short time. H.M.S. *Melbourne*, for example, sailed 11,000 miles in the first six weeks of war. At the end of September one or two small islands were still nominally German, but for all serious purposes

the Kaiser's dominions in the Pacific had disappeared. The important German wireless stations at Yap (Caroline Islands), Namu (Gilbert Islands), and Rabaul (New Pomerania), had been destroyed. Early in November the Japanese occupied the Marshall Islands and the other northern groups, which they handed over to Australia.

The German Pacific Squadron, based on Kiao-chau, did not attempt to defend the Pacific Islands. The bulk of it under Admiral von Spee had sailed for the western shores of South America, with what consequences we have already learned. Two smaller cruisers, the *Emden* and the *Koenigsberg*, betook themselves to the Indian Ocean, and, as we have recorded already, did considerable damage to our commerce. The *Koenigsberg*, after her easy destruction of the *Pegasus* in Zanzibar roads, gave little more trouble, and proved unable to play the part allotted to her in the attack on Mombasa. Her end came about 10th November, when she was found by H.M.S. *Chatham* hiding in shoal water about six miles up the Rufigi River. Here she was sealed up and disposed of at our leisure, the fairway being blocked by sunken colliers.

The *Emden* had also a short life, but, in the language of the turf, she had a good run for her money. We last saw her off the Malabar coast of India on the last day of September, 1914. Then she turned south-eastward, and captured five merchantmen in the Indian Ocean, of which she sank four, and sent one—the *Gryfedale*, into Colombo. She was next heard of off the north end of Sumatra,

where our cruisers captured her collier and her attendant steamer, the *Markomannia*. The loss of her colliers made her task difficult, but it did not weaken her boldness. On 30th October she entered the roadstead of Penang, flying a neutral flag, and rigging up a dummy funnel, with the result that she succeeded in torpedoing a Russian cruiser and a French destroyer. Once more this new *Flying Dutchman* vanished, but her course was near its end. On 9th November she appeared off the Cocos (or Keeling) Islands with the intention of destroying the wireless station and cutting the cable. A wireless message was, however, got off, which was picked up by the cruiser *Sydney* of the Australian navy, about fifty miles to the east. This message, which was much mutilated, ran: "Strange warship off ~~entrance~~," and the presence of the *Emden* was at once conjectured. The *Sydney* sighted the feathery coco-nut trees on the Keeling Islands about 9.15 a.m., and shortly after saw the tops of the *Emden's* funnels. She was lying off Direction Island, where she had landed a party to destroy the cable station. The *Emden* opened fire at a long range, and then steered a northerly course, fighting all the while a running battle with the *Sydney*. One hour and forty minutes later she ran ashore on North Keeling Island, a burning wreck, with her funnels shot away, and her decks a shambles. It was an unequal contest. The *Sydney's* 6-inch guns had an easy mastery over the 4.1-inch guns of the *Emden*, and while the latter had 230 killed and wounded,

the former had only 18 casualties. Captain Karl von Müller was captured, and his sword returned to him, for he had proved a gallant enemy. If he sent out S O S signals to entice our merchantmen, then indeed he was guilty of a grave breach of the laws of war; but there was no objection to his disguise at Penang, provided he flew the German flag before taking hostile action. He treated the crews of his captures with generosity, and no act of brutality was ever brought against him.

The *Emden* was an expensive ship to our commerce. In two months she captured seventeen merchantmen, which made up about half the total loss to that date of our mercantile marine. One way and another she cost us rather more than the price of a Dreadnought. In her short life she did far more damage proportionately than the *Alabama*, which destroyed about sixty-eight ships, valued at some three millions sterling, but took two years to do it, as against the *Emden's* two months. On the other hand, it should be said that the *Emden* was more than three times the size of the Confederate privateer. Both vessels made a stout fight at the last, and Captain Semmes, like Captain von Müller, was saved, and became something of a hero in the popular esteem of his enemies.

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The campaign against the German colony of Cameroon had meanwhile made headway. At first the expeditions from Nigeria fared badly, and the land attack having failed, recourse was had

to the sea. For some time the British warships *Cumberland* and *Dwarf* had been watching the mouth of the Cameroon River, and the approaches to the German port Duala. On 14th September, 1914, a bold attempt was made to blow up the *Dwarf* by an infernal machine. Two days later, a German merchantman, the *Nachtigal*, tried to ram the British gunboat, but was wrecked, with the loss of thirty-six men. A few days later two German launches made another attempt with spar-torpedoes, but once again the attack miscarried. On 27th September the Anglo-French force appeared before Duala, and the bombardment resulted in its unconditional surrender. Bonaberi, the neighbouring coast town, fell to an Anglo-French force under Brigadier-General Dobell, and the *Cumberland* captured eight merchantmen belonging to the Woermann and Hamburg-Amerika lines. All were in the Cameroon River, and were reported to be in good order, "most of them containing general and homeward cargoes, and considerable quantities of coal." At the same time a German gunboat, the *Soden*, probably constructed for river work, was seized and put into commission in the British navy. Meanwhile the French, operating from Libreville in French Congo, and covered by the warship *Surprise*, attacked Ukoko or Corisco Bay, and sank two armed vessels, the *Khios* and the *Itolo*. With the chief port in our hands, and the coast as a base, the Allies could now advance with better hopes of success.

The campaign in German East Africa owed

not a little to the direct help of the Navy. In September, 1914, a formidable attack was planned upon Mombasa; but the *Koenigsberg*, which was to have assisted from the sea, was compelled to take refuge up the Rufigi River by our warships. The first considerable expeditionary force appeared before Tanga at the beginning of November, 1914, accompanied by British warships, and though the soldiers' attack came to nothing, the navy's part had been fully and freely accomplished. At the end of February, 1915, a blockade of the coast was instituted, and though two boats bearing munitions got through, the operation was on the whole beyond criticism.

In the following year, when General Smuts undertook the formal reduction of the colony, the navy played a more important rôle. As the army cleared its way towards the South, the naval vessels co-operated from the sea. Tanga, which had been the scene of an early defeat in the campaign was occupied on 7th July, 1916. At the end of August several units were co-operating with the columns moving upon Dar-es-Salaam, whose wireless station had been destroyed by a naval detachment in the first fortnight of hostilities. On 4th September Rear-Admiral E. F. B. Charlton, the local Commander-in-Chief, was able to announce that the capital had surrendered. A column was moving south from Bagamoyo, and under a heavy bombardment from the larger vessels, whalers sailed in and attacked the city. Detachments were landed north of the Dar-es-Salaam and the Germans then left.

## 194 The British Navy during the War [1916]

The navy then cleared all the ports to the Portuguese frontier. Small detachments were landed under cover of the ships' guns, and the towns surrendered without making any resistance. It was largely owing to this help that General Smuts was able to pen the Germans in to the constricted hold upon the interior malarial area where they lay when he relinquished the chief command.



## CHAPTER IX

## LAKE AND RIVER FIGHTING

THE navy was, as we have seen, the scaffolding upon which the Allied war plans depended, and it was more or less involved in every operation undertaken anywhere. So much may be assumed of every campaign however purely military it may have seemed. But the Colonial campaigns included a more direct and immediate naval help, the operations that comprehended the reduction of the coastal bases.

There were also naval operations of another character in these campaigns. In Cameroon there were great river courses which offered an obvious substitute for the rail communications of civilised countries, and the navy was able to give considerable assistance by operating from the rivers. The monitor type of naval vessel is especially adapted to river work, but on only one occasion were monitors involved in river operations. The *Koenigsberg*, which in October fled up the Rufigi River in German East Africa to escape the fate which awaited her if she remained on the high seas, only courted another sort of annihilation.

In July, 1915, the monitors *Severn* and *Mersey* entered the river at the mouth of which a collier had been sunk to prevent the escape of the cruiser. Our aircraft located the exact position of the

*Koenigsberg*, which was surrounded by dense jungle and forest. On the morning of the 4th the monitors entered the river and opened fire. The crew of the *Koenigsberg* had made their position a strong one by means of shore batteries which commanded the windings of the river, and look-out towers with wireless apparatus, which gave them the range of any vessel attacking. Owing to the thick jungle a direct sight of the enemy was impossible, and we had to work by indirect fire with aeroplanes spotting for the guns.

The bombardment of 4th July, which lasted for six hours, set her on fire. The attack was resumed on 11th July, when the vessel was completely destroyed, either as a result of our shelling, or because she was blown up by her crew. The fate of this German cruiser, marooned for months far from the fresh seas among rotting swamps and jungles, is one of the most curious in the history of naval war.

The river fighting in Cameroon was of another character. The Nigeria Marine supplied a number of craft suitable for working up the creeks, and any kind of boat which would carry a gun was drawn into service. On the Wuri River small motor gunboats were used, consisting of an armoured shell with a naval gun amidships. Jabassi was captured only by the help of the naval contingent that ascended the Wuri River on which the town is situated. The first attack failed because the native troops could not stand their first experience of machine-gun fire; but

on 14th October, a week after the repulse, a second attempt succeeded.

In the capture of Edea, 26th October, 1914, Commander L. W. Braithwaite, R.N., co-operated with a flotilla of river craft which ran up the Sañaga and threatened the German line of retreat.

Almost at the beginning of the war the great lakes of Central Africa became the scene of amphibious fighting. Three of the lakes, Victoria, Tanganyika, and Nyasa, lay partly in German East Africa, and success in the reduction of the colony was largely dependent upon dominating these waterways. Victoria Nyanza lay about half in the colony and the Germans had an armed steamer, the *Mwanza*, on the lake. At the beginning of September, 1914, the Germans occupied the frontier town of Kisii, near the north-east shores of Victoria. The British had no armed vessels on the lake, but the *Clement Hill*, *Winifred* and *Kavirondo* of the Uganda Railway Marine had machine-guns and troops put on board, and were sent towards Karungu, whence the German force, on being attacked, had fled from Kisii. On the way thither an engagement was fought in which two German dhows were sunk; but on reaching Karungu on 15th September the *Winifred* found the *Mwanza* in port. With its 17-pounder guns the *Mwanza* was more than a match for the *Winifred*, which was driven off. It returned to the attack on the 17th with the *Kavirondo*, when the Germans were found to have left Karungu, and to have retired across the border..

## 198 The British Navy during the War [1914-16]

The British vessels were now taken over and armed by the navy, and hence in the next engagement, on 6th March, the *Winifred* outfought the *Mwanza*, drove her ashore, and disabled her. These vessels again played their part in the defeat of the enemy at Bukoba, a port on the western side of Lake Victoria. The British were supreme on the lake from this time, though there were still for many months a few armed German dhows at liberty. But the expedition which finally cleared the neighbourhood of the lake in July, 1916, was able to assemble and cross its waters in perfect safety for the reduction of the port Mwanza and its southern shores.

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On Lake Nyasa the British broke down the German resistance more rapidly. On 13th August, eleven days after the outbreak of war, the British steamer *Gwendolen* surprised the German steamer *Von Wissmann* at Sphinxhaven on the eastern shore, took her crew and captain prisoners, and rendered her helpless. The British were, by this success, for the time being supreme on the lake. But rumours began to circulate at the beginning of the following year that the Germans were repairing the *Von Wissmann*, and a naval detachment under Lieutenant Commander Dennistoun, was sent out to the Nyasaland Protectorate about March. A joint naval and military attack was therefore arranged, and Sphinxhaven was attacked from the land and the lake on May 30th. This was the end of the *Von Wissmann*, which was

destroyed by dynamite. Sphinxhaven was captured with considerable stores.

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The position was otherwise in Tanganyika. The first attack on Congo territory took place from the lake which forms part of its eastern border. Lukuga was bombarded on 22nd August. This was the first blow in the German-Belgian struggle in Africa, and it is important to notice that it was struck by the Germans, who were asking that the Congo territories should be considered neutral in accordance with the suggestion of the Treaty of Berlin. The Germans maintained their supremacy on the lake from this time until almost the end of 1915. They had four armed steamers available, and were able to use the lake for the supply of their expeditions against the Rhodesian frontier. A flotilla of armed motor boats was sent out from England to deal with the situation. They landed at Cape Town, and were taken 2,500 miles overland to their destination.

The German armed vessel *Kingani* was caught by two of the new British boats on 26th December. In an engagement of a few minutes' duration she was put out of action and compelled to surrender. The captain, formerly of the *Koenigsberg*, with all his officers, was killed; but the vessel was repaired, and with the *Mimi*, one of the British motor boats, fought and sank the *Hedwig von Wissmann* on 9th February, 1916. The rest of the Nyasaland German flotilla was accounted for by the Belgians; and the Belgian columns were thenceforward free

to begin that masterly campaign which finally resulted in the capture of Tabora.

Yet more intimate was the naval co-operation with the Mesopotamian campaign. The framework of the British plan was the river system of the country, and side by side with the transport there went the development of the naval river service as an offensive instrument. The landing at Fao on 17th November, 1914, at the beginning of the campaign, was prepared by the gunboat *Odin*, a sloop of 1,070 tons, which, with the armed launch *Sirdar*, silenced the Turkish guns in the small square fort. The town was then occupied by soldiers and a detachment of marines from the battleship *Ocean*, which stood in the roadstead outside. The *Espiègle*, a sister gunboat to the *Odin*, was at this time keeping ward off the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's works. The two gunboats were engaged ten days later at the battle at Sahil, which gave the British command of the delta at the head of the Persian Gulf. Taking the Turkish flank in enfilade, they were instrumental in securing a complete victory.

It was but four days later when the news came that Basra, a city and port with a history that goes back through centuries of fact to the days of romance, was evacuated. Midway between the city and Salih the Turks had sunk several vessels, one being the 5,000-ton Hamburg-America *Eckbatana*, as an obstruction, and they covered this part of the delta with a Krupp battery. But

the gunboats found a passage through the obstruction, destroyed the battery, and were able to arrive before Basra in time to prevail upon the Arabs to cease the looting they had begun on the Turkish evacuation.

The advance to Kurna was also assisted by the naval flotilla which now included besides the *Odin* and *Espiègle*, the paddle gunboat of the Royal Indian Marine, *Lawrence*, the armed launches *Shaitan* and *Miner*, and the despatch boat *Lewis Pelly*, armed with a maxim and two 3-pounders. The *Odin* unfortunately damaged her rudder, and had to be left as guard to the landing-place below Kurna. The Turks had placed their guns skilfully, and in the battle which developed on 3rd December the naval flotilla did not escape without damage. The *Espiègle* anchored and opened a bombardment on Kurna and on the batteries on the left bank of the river. The *Lawrence* went closer in, and the launches with their shallow draught were able to get inshore, and act as a mobile flank artillery. But the *Miner* had to be withdrawn with a shell in her engine-room. The *Lawrence* was holed below her waterline, and although several Turkish guns and the little settlement Mezera, opposite Kurna, had been destroyed, the British had to break off the engagement.

It was resumed a few days later. On this occasion the flotilla suffered even greater damage. The *Shaitan* lost her commander, Lieutenant-Commander J. G. M. Elkes, R.N.R., by a shell which struck the bridge, and another shell put

her out of action by destroying her rudder. The rest of the ships had their scars ; but their work materially assisted in convincing the Turks of the futility of further resistance, and when two battalions crossed over to Kurna, above the town, the commander of the enemy forces surrendered.

The naval flotilla, with the addition of a number of steel gun-barges, also took part in the battle above Kurna on 31st May, 1915. When the enemy broke they were chased by the *Espiègle* (Captain Nunn, R.N.), with the other naval vessels. But the water soon shallowed, and the larger vessels had to abandon the pursuit. Three of the armed tugs with H.M.S. *Comet* steamed onward, and on 2nd June Amara surrendered to General Townshend with his small advance force. Amara is nearly 200 miles up the river.

Towards the end of the month the flotilla, under Captain Nunn, was engaged at Nasirieh on the Euphrates. The river had been mined, and the operations of sweeping were extremely hazardous. At times the vessels were stranded on mud banks in the bed of the river, and the naval men had to refloat their craft by pulling them off. On 24th July, the struggle had reached its height, and the small gunboats steamed in and poured a short range fire on the enemy's positions. The town was occupied on the following day, and with the capture the British cleared their left flank and established its security.

With the resumption of General Townshend's advance the naval flotilla came into play once



more upon the Tigris. General Townshend's division was concentrated on 15th September within eight miles of the Turkish force below Kut. The river had been blocked by barges and heavy cables, and the obstacle was covered by the Turkish guns. On 27th September the land attack began, and the naval flotilla supported from the river. In the evening of the following day an attempt was made to force the river boom. The *Comet* (Lieutenant-Commander A. C. Cookson, R.N.) rammed it, but without getting through, and the commander was shot dead while trying personally to cut a cable connecting the barges. But the battle was won. The Turks took to flight, and the boom being removed, the naval flotilla pursued the enemy up the Tigris.

In the advance on Baghdad the navy had little part, but they covered the retreat after Ctesiphon. The boats went aground repeatedly in the shallow waters, and the river route turned and twisted so much that the supply train with the flotilla impeded the advance. The *Shaitan* had to be abandoned after her guns and stores had been removed, and the necessary delay gave the Turks their chance to catch the British rearguards. On 1st December a violent engagement was fought, and the *Firefly* and *Comet* had to be abandoned. They had gone aground, and the Turks concentrated a heavy fire upon them, making it extremely difficult to remove their crews. But the coolness and bravery of Captain Nunn and his officers and men were remarked by General Nixon.

The navy's share in the Mesopotamia campaign

came to an end for the time being. It was only resumed when General Maude retook Kut. The flotilla was then able to take up the pursuit of the retreating enemy. It is interesting to note that the *Comet* was eventually recovered.

The river operations form one of the most fascinating episodes of the naval war. They reveal the service in its historic rôle of "Jack-of-all-trades"; for the vessels were sometimes cavalry on reconnaissance, sometimes cavalry in pursuit, sometimes mobile batteries. They adopted anything that would float and made it part of their force. A dismantled aeroplane was pressed into service on one occasion, and the variety of craft which was in use before the conclusion of the operations was only limited to whatever floatable thing anyone could supply.

## CHAPTER X

## THE ROYAL NAVAL AIR SERVICE

**D**URING the crossing of the British Expeditionary Force to France, seaplanes scouted to the east and west of the channel and materially improved those precautions against attack which were so triumphantly successful. They represented the newest arm of the Navy ; but it was an arm that still took pride in belonging to the *Senior Service*. The naval airmen wore khaki, but retained the naval cap, though with a khaki cover ; but when a squadron was sent to Ostend on 27th August, 1914, it erected a flagstaff, and flew the white ensign. The men went even further. They painted their wooden huts service-grey, and imported all the phraseology of the orthodox Navy. They spoke of their "Mess-deck," "Ward-room," "Gun-room," asked leave to go ashore, and divided the day into ship watches, marked by a ship's bell. And at the end of the day they drank to the King, sitting, as is the custom of the *Senior Service*.

From Ostend the naval squadron removed its headquarters to Dunkirk, whence many bold raids and reconnaissances were made. It began a definite and continuous photographic survey from Nieuport to the Dutch frontier. The work differs from all other flying in that it necessitates

steering a steady pre-determined course, despite bursting shells or attacks from hostile machines. But its usefulness is obvious; and when the monitors began their work on the Belgian coast defences, this detailed and minute survey was of the greatest value in suggesting the precise objectives. With the naval aeroplanes and sea-planes spotting for their guns, the monitors not only inflicted considerable damage on the German fortifications, but were able to see exactly the nature of the damage and what still remained to be done.

Between 3rd and 4th September, 1914, successful skirmishes of both aeroplanes and armed motor-cars took place; and on the 16th September, near Doullens, Commander C. R. Samson, with a force of armed cars, annihilated a Uhlan patrol. On 22nd September a naval airman, Flight-Lieutenant C. H. Collet, flew 200 miles in misty weather to Düsseldorf, and descending to a height of 400 feet, dropped bombs upon the airship shed. His machine was hit, but he returned safely, and the bravery with which, in daylight, the airman descended to his objective was commented upon even in the German Press.

At the same time two other British airmen had visited Cologne, but the fog was too thick to enable them to locate the Zeppelin sheds, and they refrained for honourable reasons from dropping bombs upon the civilian part of the city. We do not know the actual damage at Düsseldorf, but the moral effect was great. "The importance of the incident," ran the Admiralty announce-

ment, "lies in the fact that it shows that, in the event of further bombs being dropped into Antwerp or other Belgian towns, measures of reprisal can certainly be adopted." The announcement, though so old, is as timely and pointed to-day as when it was first made.

On 8th October four or five aeroplanes, under Squadron-Commander D. A. Spencer Grey, set out for Germany. The party divided, one section making for Düsseldorf and the other for Cologne. At the first place bombs were dropped on the airship shed by Lieutenant Marix, and an outburst of flames and the collapse of the roof showed that their object had been attained. The attacking aeroplanes were badly hit, but the airmen succeeded in reaching the British lines in safety. The Cologne party circled for some time above the city at a height of 600 feet, and although heavily fired upon, succeeded in wrecking a large part of the military station. The boldness and skill of these raids deserve the highest praise; and as an instance of the spirit of our naval airmen, another incident may be quoted. During some patrol work it became necessary to change a propeller blade. This meant that the machine must descend, but to avoid loss of time two of the crew volunteered to carry out the work in the air. At a height of 2,000 feet they completed their task, climbing out on the bracket which carried the propeller shafting.

The chief aerial feat of November was the raid of British airmen on Friedrichshafen, the town on the Lake of Constance where the Zeppelins

are largely built. On 21st November Commander E. F. Briggs, Lieutenant J. T. Babington, and Lieutenant S. V. Sippe flew from Belfort, 250 miles distant, and dropped bombs on the airship factory, and an adjacent gas factory, which they seriously damaged. All three machines were hit, and that of Commander Briggs was brought down, through shrapnel bullets striking his petrol tank, and its occupant taken prisoner. The Cross of the Legion of Honour was awarded to the bold adventurers.

In the beginning of December the wild weather kept the aeroplanes at home. But on the 20th Commander Samson visited Brussels, where the Germans had erected airship sheds, and dropped bombs on the flying ground at Etherbeek, damaging many machines. Four days later Squadron-Commander R. B. Davies flew to the same city and dropped twelve bombs on the airship sheds, probably destroying a Parseval machine. But the great expedition of the month came on Christmas Day. Seven seaplanes flew early in the morning from England, and rendezvoused at a point described as "in the vicinity of Heligoland." Thence, escorted by cruisers and submarines, they advanced to the Schillig roads off Cuxhaven, where some German warships were lying. On these and on the shore defences they dropped their bombs, with what result is still uncertain, for the morning fog was dense, but there is good reason to believe that one or more of the Zeppelin sheds were destroyed. According to arrangement, the escorting warships waited for the return of the

airmen, and while so doing, were sighted from Heligoland, and attacked by four German sea-planes, two Zeppelins, and several submarines. The bombs of the sea-planes fell near our ships, but failed to hit them, and the Zeppelins were easily put to flight by the guns of the *Arethusa* and the *Undaunted*. For three hours the cruisers maintained their station, and returned home after picking up three of the aviators. Three others who came back later destroyed their machines to prevent them falling into the enemy's hands, and were taken on board the submarines. The fate of the seventh, Flight-Commander F. E. T. Hewlett, was for a day or two uncertain, his machine having been seen broken and derelict about eight miles from Heligoland. He was, however, picked up by a Dutch trawler, and returned safely.

It was on 22nd January, 1915, that the naval airmen began that series of bombardments of Zeebrugge and its environs which became later almost a routine. Squadron-Commander R. B. Davies and Flight-Lieutenant R. Peirse flew over the new German naval base and dropped bombs on the artillery and two submarines, one of which they destroyed. Commander Davies was at one time surrounded by seven hostile aeroplanes, but he managed to elude them, and returned, slightly wounded, to his base. Seldom in history have more adventurous deeds been done with fewer losses than in our air campaign in the first six months of the war. By this time the German anti-aircraft guns were becoming very

formidable, especially at places like Antwerp, Zeebrugge, and Ostend, where they had frequent practice.

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For some time the naval airmen assisted the Royal Flying Corps military airmen by taking part in their daily reconnaissances and offensive patrols behind the entrenched lines. The photographic survey went on and every change made by the industrious German workers was carefully noted in the enlarged prints from the airmen's negatives.

In addition to this the naval airmen made numerous organised attacks upon the enemy's aerodromes and upon enemy vessels.

Towards the end of 1916 it became possible for the Allies to undertake more formidable attacks from the air. One of the most important of these was the raid which was carried out on 20th March, 1916. About 50 British, French, and Belgian aeroplanes and seaplanes, accompanied by 15 fighting machines, attacked the German aerodromes at Zeebrugge and Houttave near by. Each of the machines—all of the British belonged to the naval arm—carried about 200 pounds of bombs; and considerable damage was done. But the effect of this raid was wider than the damage inflicted on the aerodromes. It was the largest air raid yet undertaken, and three German destroyers put to sea to escape the bombardment. They were promptly chased and driven into port once more.

A few days later a still more ambitious opera-



tion was carried out off the German coast. The objective was the airship sheds at Tondern, in Schleswig-Holstein, near the island of Sylt. Commodore R. Y. Tyrwhitt, in command of a flotilla of light cruisers and destroyers, accompanied a squadron of seaplanes and lay off the coast while they flew inland. The airmen reached their objective, but came under so heavy a fire that five of them with their three machines were brought down and made prisoners. One other misfortune marked the same expedition. Heavy weather set in, and one of the escorting destroyers, the *Medusa*, collided with the *Laverock* and sank. The officers and crew were taken off without mishap by the destroyer *Lassoo*, under the command of Lieutenant-Commander V. S. Butter, a feat of expert seamanship which drew the praise of the Admiralty.

But such exploits are to be taken merely as the more ambitious interludes in a campaign that was full of stirring incident. Towards the end of 1916 and during the first six months of 1917 the naval airmen carried out numerous powerful raids on the military establishments in occupied Belgium. The machines were gradually growing larger, speedier, and more efficient for offensive operations. Tons of explosive were dropped on selected places, and the results were verified by photography. Such bombing expeditions were carried out generally at night time, and the personnel of the squadrons, who in time adopted this form of attack almost as a routine, could never have withstood the strain if it had

## 212 The British Navy during the War [1916-17]

not been composed of young men either in or just out of their 'teens.

Despite this employment, that must have engaged a considerable percentage of the naval squadrons in France, and the continuous labours of reconnaissance, the naval airmen were ever ready to deal with any body of German aeroplanes which ventured to attack England. When the necessity for organising their air defences was forcibly brought home to the British by a number of Zeppelin raids, it was arranged that the naval air service would deal with the raiders before they reached England, and on leaving the country, while the actual protection and attack over England would fall to the Royal Flying Corps. When the Germans began to make daylight air raids by aeroplane over the country in June and July, 1917, it was the naval squadrons they had most to fear. The raids were well planned, and included the dispatch of a covering force of aeroplanes to protect the retreat of the German airmen. But the naval airmen were generally able to deal with the returning raiders and the covering squadron. The most ambitious daylight raid was that of 7th July, when 22 Gotha aeroplanes flew over London and dropped some two tons of explosive. But the raiders were engaged on their return 40 miles off the East Coast. Two of the machines were driven down and fell into the sea, and another machine fell in flames off the mouth of the Scheldt. The Dunkirk Squadron in a number of flights destroyed three enemy seaplanes, and brought down four others. None

of these seaplanes belonged to the raiding squadrons, but were part of the covering force sent to protect the retreat of the raiders. The incident is rather typical than exceptional, and it serves to show the efficiency of the navy's newest arm.

## CHAPTER XI

## THE BRITISH SUBMARINES

THE War has thrown the German submarines into so high relief that their British counterparts fade away into the shadowy background. But it is as incorrect to imagine that the British submarines were inactive as it is unjust to ignore the hazardous staging of a Submarine's Exploits, even when the vessel belongs to the enemy. The German submarine campaign covered the service with so much infamy that we are apt to forget the real courage demanded of the enemy crews.

That, however, is not our present concern, but the reflection arises unbidden when we attempt to deal even with a few of the episodes that beset the path of the British submarines. Some of these, the bulk of them, indeed, cannot as yet be made known. In proportion as they were more daring—perhaps impudent is the more fitting term—they are the more secret, for some of the exploits of the British submarines, though they would hearten the Allies, would put the enemy too much on their guard to the weak points of their protective system.

At the outbreak of war the general consensus of opinion restricted the rôle of the submarines to coast protection; but it was speedily found

that they were capable of performing more ambitious work. One of the first uses to which they were put was reconnaissance. The war had hardly begun before the British submarines were engaged in patrolling the German coast. Their special characteristics fitted them for the unobtrusive watch of the enemy's movements, and it is safe to say that but for their constant observation the course of events in the North Sea would have been very different.

Submarines, too, formed part of the force which guaranteed the safety of the Expeditionary Force when it crossed to France, and it is wrong to imagine that protective work of this kind ceased there. The convoy of this first force of soldiers takes on a unique character from being the first of the series ; but it was succeeded by an almost continual series of similar voyages in which the smaller craft of the navy naturally took the chief place.

But this was merely the negative side of the work. The positive side, the offensive which the British submarines waged, was more striking. Indeed, of all the navy's activities there is nothing that excelled the thrilling adventures of the submarines. They had, of course, to go out and find their enemy. They were not circumstanced like the Germans, who found the high seas covered with enemy vessels. The Allied naval craft were for ever on the seas, and when the Germans became convinced of the smallness of the result from the use of submarines against other naval vessels, they began to attack merchant ships.

## 216 The British Navy during the War [1915]

It is clear that if merchantmen were to be open to submarine attack there would be every chance of a golden harvest, and hence the German U boats figured so much in the later history of the war that, in comparison, the British submarines seemed to be inactive.

This was far from being the case. Whenever after much seeking they found a mark, the British submarines made the most of it. Their campaigns in the Sea of Marmora and the Baltic lacked nothing in incident. In the former case they materially assisted the operations in Gallipoli. Their object was the interruption of the Turkish communications. Men and supplies were largely being sent by sea. The land communications were open to interruption at Bulair, where the peninsula narrowed to a narrow isthmus, and the naval vessels from the Gulf of Saros could completely close the road. Towards the end of April, 1915, the attempt to cut the sea communications was begun, and though it was marked by an early mischance it proved a considerable success.

† The submarine E14 (Commander G. Courtney Boyle) dived under the mine-field that guarded the Straits on 27th April, and entered the Narrows about daybreak to find it thick with patrol boats. But there was also a Turkish gunboat within striking distance, and before submerging E14 discharged a torpedo. The gunboat sank, and E14 had also to dive as the men in one of the patrol boats were trying to grasp her periscope! She then proceeded to the Sea of Marmora, and

ran about as she could, even to the Bosphorus, for three weeks. Frequently she was under fire from guns and rifles; but she made life unhappy for the Turks. Numbers of ships she drove back towards Constantinople. On 29th April she sank a transport; four days later she destroyed a gunboat or mine-layer; and on 10th May a large transport was sent to the bottom.

Meanwhile the AE2, a submarine of the Australian Navy, had been lost. Under Lieutenant-Commander H. H. G. D. Stoker, R.N., the submarine was entering the Sea of Marmora, when she was sunk. And there were three other British and four French submarines lost during these operations in the Dardanelles. The Straits represented, in fact, the ideal position for a defensive against such craft, and such exploits as those of E14 would never have been possible if Britain and not Turkey had been the warden of these waters. The casualties to Allied submarines plying in the Straits were not nearly so wonderful as their successes.

One of the most amazing adventures of E14, which was later joined by E11 (Lieutenant-Commander M. E. Nasmith), was the engagement with Turkish troops advancing across the Bulair Isthmus. The two submarines fought for a whole morning with the troops until a field-gun arrived which kept them at a respectful distance. E11 must have added a fillip to the Turkish inertia. She chased a cargo vessel up to the pier in Rodosto Harbour, and then torpedoed her. One engagement she had with the Turkish cavalry. Another

## 218 The British Navy during the War [1915

cargo boat had been chased until she ran aground, but when the men were about to follow her to finish her off, Turkish cavalry appeared on the scene, and by their fire compelled the submarine to withdraw. Later on she dived and entered the Golden Horn, and sank a transport before the arsenal. Among her achievements was the sinking of the battleship *Barbarossa*.

E12 (Lieutenant-Commander K. M. Bruce) fought a mixed battle with two steamers and the five sailing ships they had in tow. One of these steamers she sank. The other was driven ashore well alight, and two of the tows were sunk. But the Turks fought well with rifles and a one-inch gun, and the submarine eventually came under fire from the shore. The crews of merchantmen were, to their surprise, invariably well treated, seen into their boats, and given food. E14 put her ~~experience~~ experience to good purpose by returning after her first three weeks in the Sea of Marmora and staying 70 days. But it is impossible to give her full story at present, and all that we have given is merely a sample of the versatile, daring, and humane way in which the submarines sought, found and achieved their objective.

Even more hidden were the exploits of the submarines in the Baltic, where the British navy came, in the early part of 1915, into immediate contact with the most formidable enemy on the seas, Germany. The atmosphere in which they worked was more perilous. For in addition to operating from a Russian base, which could hardly fail to be some handicap to the crews



of another navy, the submarines had to work under novel conditions. The Eastern Baltic is so long icebound that Germany might have enjoyed a large measure of immunity but for the daring of the submarines that went about their work when the seas were covered with ice. An ice-breaker shepherded them daily to their pasturage; but by nightfall it had become almost impossible to return in safety. The submarine cannot fail to be a frail craft. To give them a strength of skin that would make them invulnerable to shell-fire or the perils of ice-floes would be to make them immobile and impossible to manœuvre. The ice had to be added to the shell-fire as normal working risk. Commander Max Norton with E9 contrived to find success under even such handicaps. He had already proved his nerve by sinking the cruiser *Hela* early in the War off the Frisian coast; but his new work was even more precarious. An occasional destroyer sunk enlivened the submarine's days between the struggles with ice which threatened to freeze her in.

On one occasion she encountered a force of German battleships and destroyers. With infinite care she manœuvred towards one of the battleships and fired two torpedoes, and both were got home.

Er (Commander F. N. Lawrence) had the good fortune to sink a transport; but was attacked by the others, and compelled to sink. Altogether during 1915 some five transports had been destroyed, and the British submarines in a few months had also damaged a battle cruiser of the

## 220 The British Navy during the War [1915-16]

*Moltke* type (19th August, 1915), and sunk the cruiser *Prinz Adalbert* (23rd October), the light cruiser *Undine* (7th November), and the light cruiser *Bremen* (17th December).

These casualties inflicted upon German naval vessels took an ample revenge for the German submarine surprises in the first month of the War. In the autumn the submarines began to transfer their attentions to the Baltic merchant vessels with such success that the traffic almost ceased towards the middle of November. The obvious bearing of such a campaign on the German plans needs no emphasis. But the submarines had a wholesome effect in another way. On one or two occasions the Germans had tried to develop their successes against Russia by a landing of German troops behind the northern flank of the Russian front. The evident alertness and efficiency of the submarines had no little influence in causing the Germans to abandon such schemes.

If the successes of the British submarines diminished as the War wore on, this was clearly due to the withdrawal of the objective rather than to the large plans for mining which the Germans adopted. When an opportunity was offered it was promptly seized. The German Dreadnought *Westfalen* was caught by E23 (Commander R. R. Turner) in August, 1916. A torpedo was seen to strike the battleship, and her escorting destroyers at once gathered about her to cover her retirement to harbour. As she was thus limping home with the adequate protection of five destroyers, she was once more torpedoed;

but the submarine was, for obvious reasons, unable to discover whether the second torpedo struck. The Germans, possibly trading upon this, announced on 23rd August, that the ship had reached port safely.

•When the full story of the work of the British submarines can be told it will be seen how much more versatile, daring and efficient were their operations ; and we may reasonably reflect upon the fact that they were marked by the customary humanity and care for human life that has ever marked the use of the British navy.

## CHAPTER XII

## THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND

*Preliminaries.*

FROM the opening of the war the British navy had been sustained by the hope that some day and somewhere they would meet the German High Sea Fleet in a battle in open sea. It had been their hope since the hot August day when the great battleships disappeared from the eyes of watchers on the English shores. It had comforted them in the long months of waiting amid the winds and snows of the northern waters. Since the beginning of the year 1916 this hope had become a confident belief. There was no special ground for it, except the general one that as the case of Germany became more desperate she would be forced to use every asset in the struggle. As the onslaught on Verdun grew more costly and fruitless, and as the armies of Russia began to stir with the approach of summer, it seemed that the hour for the gambler's throw might soon arrive.

The long vigil was trying to the nerve and temper of every sailor, and in special to the Battle Cruiser Fleet, which represented the first line of British sea strength. It was the business of the battle cruisers to make periodical sweeps through the North Sea, and to be first upon the

scene should the enemy appear. They were the advance guard, the *corps de choc* of the Grand Fleet; they were the hounds which must close with the quarry and hold it till the hunters of the Battle Fleet arrived. Hence the task of their commander was one of peculiar anxiety and strain. At any moment the chance might come, so he must be sleeplessly watchful. He would have to make sudden and grave decisions, for it was certain that the longed-for opportunity would have to be forced before it matured. To bring the enemy to action risks must be run, and the strength of a fleet is a more brittle and less replaceable thing than the strength of an army. New levies can be called for on land, and tolerable infantry turned out in a few months; but it takes six years to make a junior naval officer, it takes two years to build a cruiser, and three years to replace a battleship. The German hope was by attrition or some happy accident to wear down the superior British strength to an equality with their own. A rash act on the part of a British admiral might fulfil that hope; but, on the other hand, without boldness, even rashness, Britain could not get to grips with her evasive foe.

So far Sir David Beatty and the Battle Cruisers had not been fortunate. We must not regard the North Sea at the time as an area where only British and neutral flags were flown. From the shelter of the mine-strewn waters around Heligoland the German warships made occasional excursions, for they could not rot for ever in harbour. Germany's battle cruisers had more than once raided the

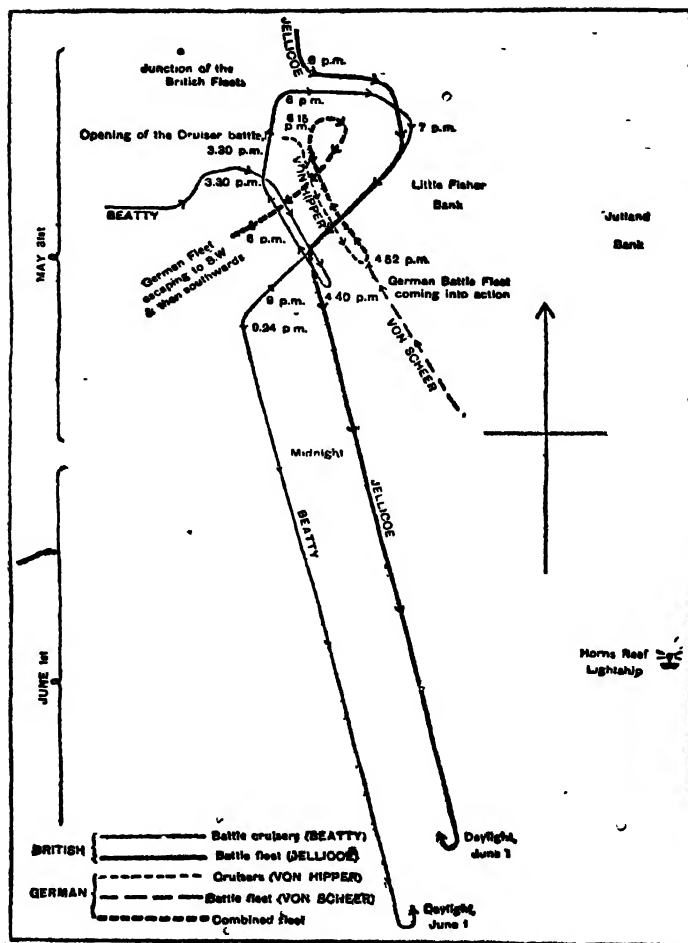
English coasts. Her battleships had made stately progresses in short circles in the vicinity of the Jutland and Schleswig shores. But so far Sir David Beatty had been unlucky. At the Battle of the Bight of Heligoland on 28th August, 1914, his great ships had encountered nothing more serious than enemy cruisers. At the time of the raid on Hartlepool in December of the same year he had just failed, owing to fog, to intercept the raiders. In the Battle of the Dogger Bank on 24th January, 1915, an accident to his flagship had prevented him destroying the whole German fleet of battle cruisers. It was clear that the Germans, if caught in one of their hurried sorties, would not fight unless they had a very clear advantage. Hence, if the battle was to be joined at all, it looked as if the first stage, at all events, must be fought by Britain against long odds.

On Tuesday afternoon, 30th May, 1916, the bulk of the British Grand Fleet left its bases on one of its customary sweeps. It sailed in two divisions. To the north was the Battle Fleet under Sir John Jellicoe—the Battle Squadrons; one Battle Cruiser Squadron, the 3rd, under Rear-Admiral the Honourable Horace Hood; the 1st Cruiser Squadron, under Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Arbuthnot, Bart.; the 2nd Cruiser Squadron, under Rear-Admiral Heath; the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, under Commodore Le Mesurier; and the 4th, 11th, and 12th Destroyer Flotillas. Farther south moved the Battle Cruiser Fleet, under Sir David Beatty—the 1st and 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadrons, under Rear-Admiral Brock and Rear-Admiral

Pakenham ; the 5th Battle Squadron, four vessels of the *Queen Elizabeth* class, under Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas; the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons, and the 1st, 9th, 10th, and 13th Destroyer Flotillas. It will be noticed that the two divisions of the Grand Fleet were not sharply defined by battleships and battle cruisers, for Sir John Jellicoe had with him one squadron of battle cruisers, and Sir David Beatty had one squadron of the largest battleships.

On the morning of the last day of May the German High Sea Fleet also put to sea, and sailed north a hundred miles or so from the Jutland coast. First went Admiral von Hipper's Battle Cruisers, five in number, with the usual complement of cruisers and destroyers. Following them came the Battle Fleet, under Admiral von Scheer. With a few exceptions, all the capital ships of the German navy were present in this expedition. What the purpose of von Scheer was we can only guess. Warned of the British sailing, he may have hoped to engage and destroy a portion of the British fleet before the remainder came to its aid. He may have contemplated a raid upon some part of the British coast. He may have been escorting cruisers which were to make a dash for open sea and act as commerce destroyers. Or there may have been some far-reaching design associated with the sea war against Russia. It is idle to speculate on the precise reason which brought him out, but it seems probable that it was no mere practice cruise. German public opinion was beginning to demand some proof of

11916



Battle of Jutland.—Track Chart.



naval activity since the submarine campaign had languished. It may be that von Scheer's enterprise was a gamble forced upon him by the state of popular feeling at home.

The last week of May had been hot and bright on shore, with low winds and clear heavens ; but on the North Sea there lay a light summer haze, and on the last day of May loose grey clouds were beginning to overspread the sky. Sir David Beatty, having completed his sweep to the south, had turned north about midday to rejoin Sir John Jellicoe. The sea was dead calm, like a sheet of glass. His light cruiser squadrons formed a screen in front of him from east to west.

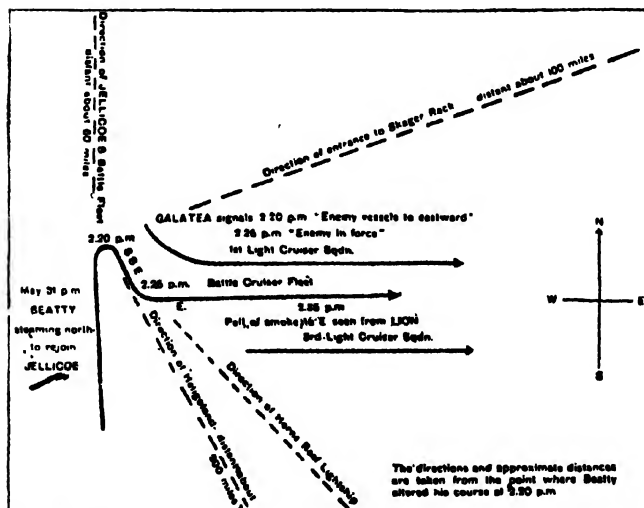
At 2.20 p.m. *Galatea* (Commodore Alexander-Sinclair), the flagship of the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron, signalled enemy vessels to the east. Sir David Beatty at once altered course to south-south-east, the direction of the Horn Reef, in order to get between the enemy and his base.

Five minutes later *Galatea* signalled again that the enemy was in force, and no mere handful of light cruisers. At 2.35 the watchers on *Lion* saw a heavy pall of smoke to the eastward, and the course was accordingly altered to that direction, and presently to the north-east. The 1st and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons spread in a screen before the battle cruisers. A seaplane was sent up from *Engadine* (once the Cunard Liner *Campania*) at 3.8, and at 3.30 its first report was received. Flying at a height of 900 feet, within two miles of hostile light cruisers, it was able to identify the enemy. Sir David Beatty promptly

formed line of battle, and a minute later came in sight of von Hipper's five battle cruisers.

*The First Stage—3:48 p.m. to 5 p.m.*

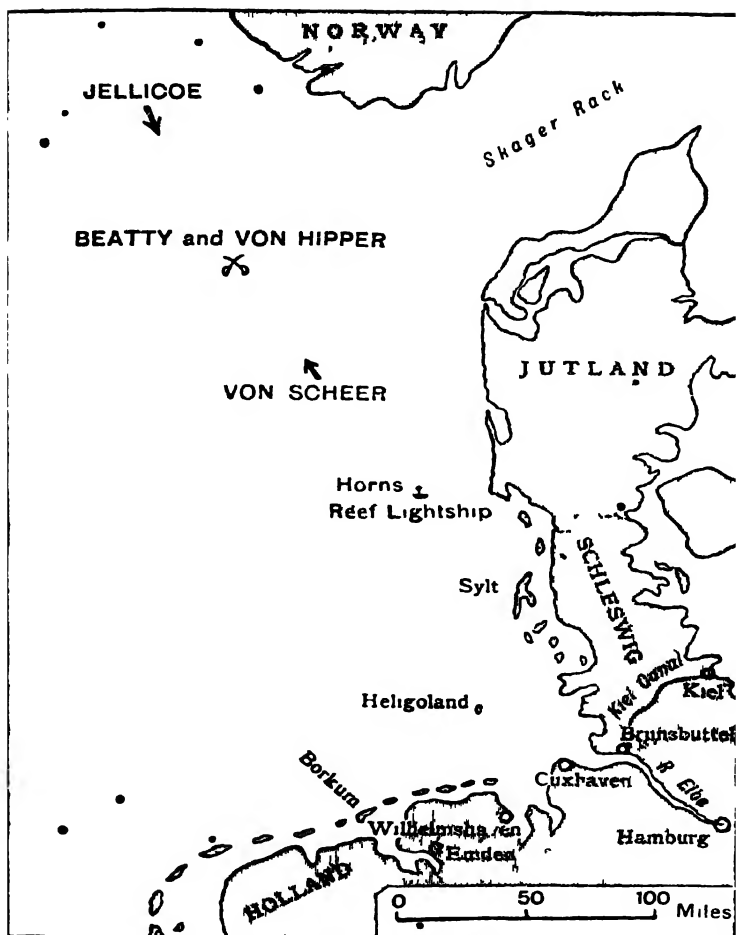
Of all human contests, a naval battle makes the greatest demands upon the resolution and



**Battle of Jutland.—(1) Beatty with the Battle Cruiser Fleet sights the enemy, and alters his course to cut the hostile fleet off from its base and bring it to action.**

gallantry of the men and the skill and coolness of the commanders. In a land fight the general may be thirty miles behind the line of battle, but the admiral is in the thick of it. He takes the same risk as the ordinary sailor, and as often as not his flagship leads the fleet. For three hundred years it had been the special pride of Britain that her ships were ready to meet any

1916]



Battle of Jutland—Sketch showing the general situation at the opening of the action between the Battle Cruiser Fleets.

enemy at any time on any sea. If this proud boast were no longer hers, then her glory would indeed have departed.

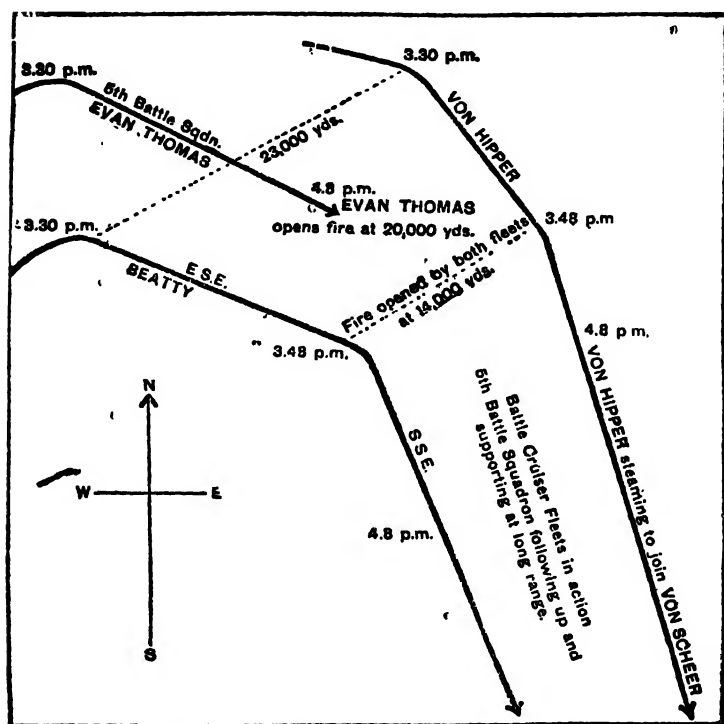
At 3.30 that afternoon Sir David Beatty had to make a momentous decision. The enemy was clearly falling back upon his main Battle Fleet, and every mile the British admiral moved forward brought him nearer to an unequal combat. For the moment the odds were in his favour, since he had six battle cruisers against von Hipper's five, as well as the 5th Battle Squadron, but presently the odds would be enormously against him. He was faced with the alternative of conducting a half-hearted running fight with von Hipper, to be broken off before the German Battle Fleet was reached, or of engaging closely and hanging on even after the junction with von Scheer had been made. In such a fight the atmospheric conditions would compel him to close the range and so lose the advantage of his heavier guns, and his own battle cruisers were less stoutly protected than those of the enemy, which had the armour of a first-class battleship. Sir David Beatty was never for a moment in doubt. He chose the course which was not only heroic, but right on every ground of strategy. Twice already by a narrow margin Beatty had missed bringing the German capital ships to action. He was resolved that now he would forgo no chance which the fates might send.

Von Hipper was steering east-south-east in the direction of his base. Beatty changed his course to conform, and the fleets were now some 23,000

yards apart. The 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron took station ahead with the destroyers of the 9th and 13th Flotillas; then came the 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron, led by *Lion*; then the 2nd; and then Evan-Thomas, with the 5th Battle Squadron. Beatty formed his ships on a line of bearing to clear the smoke—that is, each ship took station on a compass bearing from the flagship, of which they were diagonally astern. At 3.48 the action began, both sides opening fire at the same moment. The range was 18,500 yards, the direction was generally south-south-east, and both fleets were moving at full speed, an average perhaps of twenty-five knots. The wind was from the south-east, the visibility for the British was good, and the sun was behind them. They had ten capital ships to the German five. The omens seemed propitious for victory.

In all battles there is a large element of sheer luck and naked caprice. In the first stage, when Beatty had the odds in his favour, he was destined to suffer his chief losses. A fortunate shot struck *Indefatigable* (Captain Sowerby) in a vital place, and she immediately blew up. The German gunnery at the start was uncommonly good; it was only later, when things went ill with them, that their shooting became wild. Meantime the 5th Battle Squadron had come into action at a range of 20,000 yards, and engaged the rear enemy ships. From 4.15 onward for half an hour the duel between the battle cruisers was intense, and the enemy fire gradually grew less rapid as ours increased. At 4.18 the German

battle cruiser third in the line was seen to be on fire. Presently *Queen Mary* (Captain Prowse) was hit, and blew up. She had been at the Battle of the Bight of Heligoland; she was perhaps the



Battle of Jutland.—(2) Opening of the Action between the Battle Cruiser Fleets.

best gunnery ship in the fleet; and her loss left Beatty with only four battle cruisers. Happily she did not go down before her superb marksmanship had taken heavy toll of the enemy. The haze was now settling on the waters, and all that we could

see of the foe was a blurred outline. The sea was full of submarines, but by singular good fortune the British ships passed through them without mishap.

Meantime, as the great vessels raced southwards, the lighter craft were fighting a battle of their own. Eight destroyers of the 13th Flotilla—*Nestor*, *Nomad*, *Nicator*, *Narborough*, *Pelican*, *Petard*, *Obdurate*, and *Nerissa*, together with *Moorsom* and *Morris* of the 10th, and *Turbulent* and *Termagant* of the 9th, moved out at 4.15 for a torpedo attack, at the same time as the enemy destroyers came forward for the same purpose. The British flotilla at once came into action at close quarters with fifteen destroyers and a light cruiser of the enemy, and beat them back with the loss of two destroyers. This combat had made some of them drop astern, so a full torpedo attack was impossible. *Nestor*, *Nomad*, and *Nicator*, under Commander the Honourable E. B. S. Bingham, fired two torpedoes at the German battle cruisers, and were sorely battered themselves by the German secondary armament. They clung to their task till the turning movement came which we shall presently record, and the result of it was to bring them within close range of many enemy battleships. Both *Nestor*\* and *Nomad* were badly hit, and only *Nicator* regained the flotilla. Some of the others fired their torpedoes,

\* *Nestor* was sunk, and Commander Bingham was saved and taken to Germany as a prisoner of war. He received the Victoria Cross.

and apparently the rear German ship was struck. The gallantry of these smaller craft cannot be overpraised. That subsidiary battle, fought under the canopy of the duel of the greater ships, was one of the most heroic episodes of the action.

We have seen that the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron was scouting ahead of the battle cruisers. At 4.38 *Southampton* (Commodore Goodenough) reported the German battle fleet ahead. Instantly Beatty recalled the destroyers, and at 4.42 von Scheer was sighted to the south-east. Beatty put his helm to the starboard and swung round to a northerly course. From the pursuer he had now become the pursued, and his aim was to lead the combined enemy fleets towards Sir John Jellicoe. The 5th Battle Squadron, led by Evan-Thomas in *Barham*, now hard at it with von Hipper, was ordered to follow suit. Meanwhile *Southampton* and the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron continued forward to observe, and did not turn till within 13,000 yards of von Scheer's battleships, and under their fire. At five o'clock Beatty's battle cruisers were steering north, *Fearless* and the 1st Destroyer Flotilla leading, the 1st and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons on his starboard bow, and the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron on his port quarter. Behind him came Evan-Thomas, attended by *Champion* and the destroyers of the 13th Flotilla.

*The Second Stage—5 p.m. to 6.50 p.m.*

It is not difficult to guess what was in the mind of von Scheer and von Hipper. They had

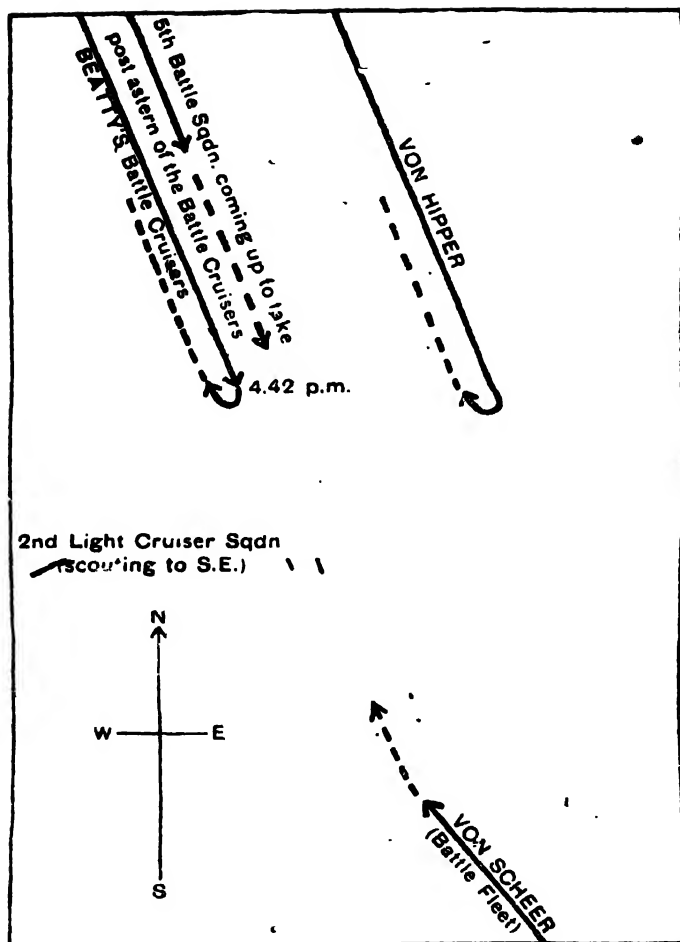


had the good fortune to destroy two of Beatty's battle cruisers, and now that their whole fleet was together they hoped to destroy more. It seems clear that the weather conditions that afternoon made Zeppelins useless, and accordingly they knew nothing of Jellicoe's presence in the north. They believed they had caught Beatty cruising on his own account, and that the gods had delivered him into their hands. From 4.45 till 6 o'clock to the mind of the German admirals the battle resolved itself into a British flight and a German pursuit.

The case presented itself otherwise to Sir David Beatty, who knew that the British Battle Fleet was some fifty miles off, and that it was his business to coax the Germans towards it. He was fighting now against heavy odds, eight capital ships as against at least nineteen, but he had certain real advantages. He had the speed of the enemy, and this enabled him to overlap their line and to get his battle cruisers on their bow. In the race southwards he had driven his ships at full speed, and consequently his squadron had been in two divisions, for Evan-Thomas's battleships had not the pace of the battle cruisers. But when he headed north he reduced his pace, and there was no longer a tactical division of forces. The eight British ships were now one fighting unit.

It was Beatty's intention to nurse his pursuers into the arms of Jellicoe. For this his superior speed gave him a vital weapon. Once the northerly course had been entered upon the enemy could not

[1916



Battle of Jutland.—(3) German Battle Fleet comes up - Beatty turns  
northward to draw the enemy on to Jellicoe's Battle Fleet.

change direction, except in a very gradual curve, without exposing himself to enfilading fire from the British battle cruisers at the head of the line. He was, as the French say, *accroché*, and though in a sense he was the pursuer, and so had the initiative, yet as a matter of fact his movements were mainly controlled by Sir David Beatty's will. That the British admiral should have seen and reckoned with this fact in the confusion of a battle against odds is not the least of the proofs of his sagacity and fortitude.

Unfortunately the weather changed for the worse. The British ships were silhouetted against a clear western sky, but the enemy was shrouded in mist, and only at rate intervals showed dim shapes through the gloom. The range was about 14,000 yards. In spite of the difficulties the British gunnery was singularly effective. One German battle cruiser—perhaps *Lutzow*—fell out of the line in a broken condition, and others of their ships showed signs of increasing distress. As before, the lesser craft played a gallant part. At 5.5 *Onslow* and *Moresby*, who had been helping *Engadine* with the seaplane, took station on the engaged bow of *Lion*, and the latter struck with a torpedo the sixth ship in the German line and set it on fire. She then passed south to clear the range of smoke, and took station on the 5th Battle Squadron. At 5.33 Sir David Beatty's course was north-north-east, and he was gradually hauling round to the north-eastward. He knew that the Battle Fleet could not be far off, and he was heading the Germans on an easterly course,

so that Jellicoe should be able to strike to the best advantage.

At 5.50 on his port bow he sighted British cruisers, and six minutes later had a glimpse of the leading ships of the Battle Fleet five miles to the north. He at once changed course to east and increased speed, bringing the range down to 12,000 yards. He was forcing the enemy to a course on which the British Battle Fleet might overwhelm them.

We must now turn to the doings of the Battle Fleet itself. When Sir John Jellicoe was informed that the enemy had been sighted he was distant from Beatty between fifty and sixty miles. He at once proceeded at full speed on a course south-east by south to join the battle cruisers. The engine-rooms made heroic efforts, and the whole fleet maintained a speed in excess of the trial speeds of some of the older vessels. The Commander-in-Chief's own tribute deserves quotation: "It must never be forgotten that the prelude to action is the work of the engine-room department, and that during action the officers and men of that department perform their most important duties without the incentive which a knowledge of the course of the action gives to those on deck. The qualities of discipline and endurance are taxed to the utmost under these conditions, and they were, as always, most fully maintained throughout the operations now reviewed. *Several ships attained speeds that had never before been reached, thus showing very clearly their high state of steaming efficiency.*"

It was no easy task to effect a junction at the proper moment, since there was an inevitable difference in estimating the rendezvous by "reckoning." Moreover, the hazy weather made it hard to recognize which ships were enemy and which were British when the moment of meeting came.

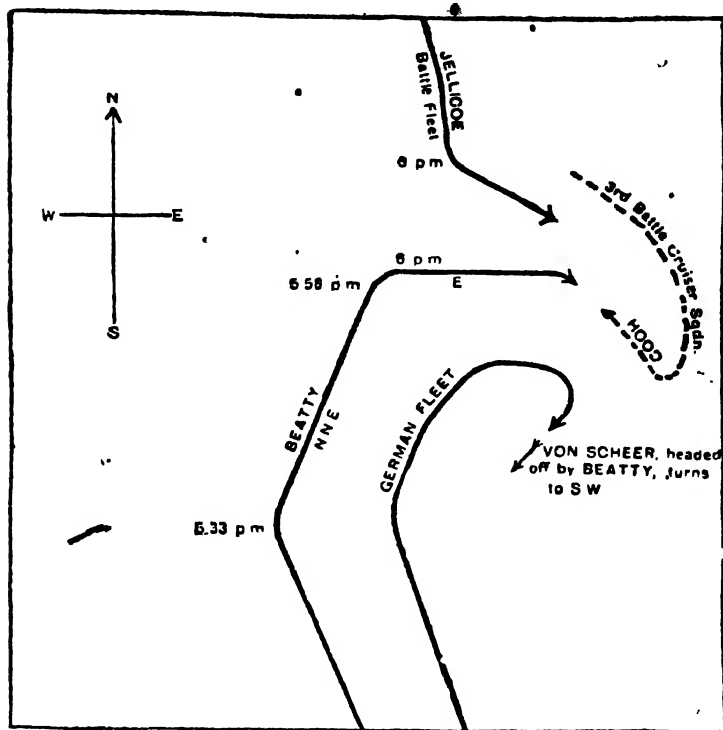
The 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron, under Rear-Admiral Hood, led the Battle Fleet. At 5.30 Hood observed flashes of gun-fire and heard the sound of guns to the south-westward. He sent *Chester* (Captain Lawson) to investigate, and at 5.45 this ship engaged three or four enemy light cruisers. For twenty minutes the fight continued against heavy odds, and here occurred one of the most conspicuous instances of gallantry in the battle. Boy (1st Class) John Travers Cornwell was mortally wounded early in the fight, and all the crew of the gun where he was stationed lay dead or dying around him. He nevertheless remained alone at his post, waiting orders, and exposed to constant fire. He was only sixteen and a half, and he did not live to receive the reward of his courage.\* "I recommend his case for special recognition," wrote Sir David Beatty, "in justice to his memory, and as an acknowledgment of the high example set by him."

*Chester* rejoined the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron at 6.5. Hood was too far to the east, so he turned north-westward, and five minutes later sighted

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\* He received posthumously the Victoria Cross.

Beatty. He received orders to take station ahead, and at 6.20 he led the line, "bringing his squadron into action ahead in a most inspiring manner,



Battle of Jutland.—(4) The junction of the British fleets. Beatty heads off von Scheer, who turns and retires south-westward before the combined fleets.

worthy of his great naval ancestors." He was now only 8,000 yards from the enemy, and under a desperate fire. His flagship, *Invincible*, was sunk. "I saw one of her picket-boats," wrote an observer, "go hundreds of feet up into the air,

spinning like a leaf in an eddy of wind, followed by a huge lick of flame as high as her masts. A great belch of smoke, and then it was all over." With her perished an admiral who in faithfulness and courage must rank with the heroic figures of British naval history. This was at the head of the British line. Meantime the 1st and 2nd Cruiser Squadrons accompanying the Battle Fleet had also come into action. *Defence* and *Warrior* had sunk an enemy light cruiser about six o'clock. *Canterbury*, which was in company with the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron, had engaged enemy light cruisers and destroyers which were attacking the destroyers *Shark*, *Acasta*, and *Christopher*—an engagement in which *Shark* was sunk. A survivor of *Shark* has described the scene: "Right ahead of us and close at hand we saw two columns of German destroyers. We were racing along at the time, and our skipper took us at full speed right towards the enemy lines. There was a column of their small craft on each side of us, and as soon as we got abreast of them we attacked at close range, and managed to torpedo a couple of enemy destroyers, one on each beam. All the time we were getting it hot—guns were popping at us from all quarters, and we were firing back as hard as we could go, as well as using our torpedo tubes. Of course a fight under these conditions could not last long for us. We had been engaged about ten minutes when two torpedoes hit fairly, one on each side of our ship, and ripped three holes in her, so that she sank almost at once." At 6.16 the 1st Cruiser Squadron, driving in the

enemy light cruisers, had got into a position between the German and British Battle Fleets, since Sir Robert Arbuthnot was not aware of the enemy's approach, owing to the mist, until he was in close proximity to them.<sup>6</sup> *Defence* was sunk, *Warrior* passed to the rear disabled, and *Black Prince* received damage which led later to her destruction. The last act of the Admiral before his death was to signal a cheerful apology to his squadron.

Meantime Beatty's lighter craft had also been hotly engaged. At 6.5 *Onslow* sighted an enemy light cruiser 6,000 yards off, which was trying to attack *Lion* with torpedoes, and at once closed and engaged at a range from 4,000 to 2,000 yards. She then closed with the German battle cruisers, but after firing one torpedo she was struck amidships by a heavy shell. Undefeated, she fired her remaining three torpedoes at the enemy Battle Fleet. She was then taken in tow by *Defender*, who was herself damaged, and in spite of constant shelling the two gallant destroyers managed to retire in safety. "I consider the performances of these two destroyers," wrote Sir David Beatty, "to be gallant in the extreme, and I am recommending Lieutenant-Commander J. C. Tovey, of *Onslow*, and Lieutenant-Commander L. R. Palmer, of *Defender*, for special recognition." Again, the 3rd Light Cruiser Squadron, under Rear-Admiral Napier, which was well ahead of the enemy on Beatty's starboard bow, attacked with torpedoes at 6.25, *Falmouth* and *Yarmouth* especially distinguishing themselves. One German battle



cruiser was observed to be hit and fall out of the line.

From 5.45 to 6.50, while the two British fleets were coming into line, the situation was highly delicate, and the fighting was necessarily intricate and confused. The position at 6.50 was, shortly, as follows: Beatty had turned the German van, and his course from 6.50 onward was south-east, gradually moving towards south. The 1st and 2nd Battle Cruiser Squadrons led; then the 3rd Battle Cruiser Squadron; then followed the divisions of the Battle Fleet—first the 2nd Battle Squadron, under Vice-Admiral Sir Thomas Jephson; then the 4th, under Vice-Admiral Sir Doveton Sturdee, containing Sir John Jellicoe's flagship, *Iron Duke*; and finally the 1st, under Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil Burney. In the weather conditions it was impossible to work the fleet by independent divisions, so the formation adopted was a single line.

Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron, which had up to now been with Beatty, intended to form ahead of the Battle Fleet, but the nature of the deployment compelled it to form astern. *Warspite* had her steering-gear damaged, and drifted towards the enemy's line under a furious cannonade. For a little she involuntarily interposed herself between *Warrior* and the enemy's fire. Matters were presently put right; but it is a curious proof of the caprices of fortune in battle that while a single shot at the beginning of the action sank *Indefatigable*, this intense bombardment did *Warspite* little harm. Only

one gun turret was hit, and her engines were uninjured.

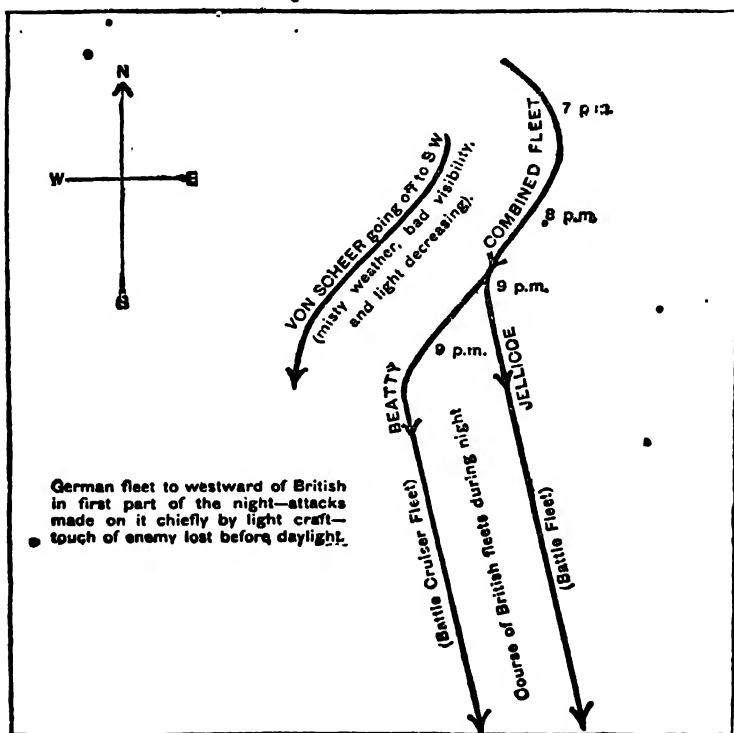
At 6.50, then, the two British fleets were united, the German line was headed off on the east, and Beatty and Jellicoe were working their way between the enemy and his home ports. "The grandest sight I have ever seen," wrote an eye-witness, "was the sight of our battle line—miles of it fading into mist—taking up their positions like clockwork, and then belching forth great sheets of fire and clouds of smoke." The enemy was now greatly outnumbered, and the skill of the British admirals had won a complete strategic success. But the fog was deepening, and the night was falling. It looked as if daylight might be wanting to give the British a chance of winning a decisive victory.

*The Third Stage—6.50 p.m. to 9 p.m.*

The third stage of the battle—roughly, two hours long—was an intermittent duel between the main fleets. Admiral von Scheer had no wish to linger, and he moved southwards at his best speed, with the British line shepherding him on the east. We have seen the nature of the British dispositions at this moment. The whole fleet now formed one fighting unit, but it will be clearer if we take the work of the battle cruisers and the battleships separately.

Beatty had succeeded in crumpling up the head of the German line, and its battleships were now targets for the majority of his battle cruisers. The visibility was becoming greatly reduced.

The mist no longer merely veiled the targets, but often shut them out altogether. This not only made gunnery extraordinarily difficult, but pre-



Battle of Jutland.—(5) Von Scheer in full retreat—Jellicoe driving him away to the south-westward and interposing between him and his naval bases.

vented the British from keeping proper contact with the enemy. At the same time, such light, as there was was more favourable to Beatty and Jellicoe than to von Scheer. The German ships showed up at intervals against the sunset, as did

Cradock's cruisers off Coronel, and gave the British gunners their chance.

Of the effects of the gunnery an extract from an officer's letter gives some conception: "One of our 12-inch-gun ships put her salvos into a German ship so accurately that the enemy vessel heeled right over under the heavy blows. Of course the German went out of action. If the 12-inch gun could do this to a ship, how much more destructive must be the well-directed fire from 15-inch or 13.5-inch guns. . . . It was the big calibre that told, and it was a gunner's battle. Our gunnery is better at all points than that of the enemy."

From seven o'clock onward Beatty was steering south, and gradually bearing round to south-west and west, in order to get into touch with the enemy. At 7.14 he sighted them at a range of 15,000 yards—two battle cruisers and two battleships of the *Koenig* class. The sun had now fallen behind the western clouds, and at 7.17 Beatty increased speed to twenty-two knots, and re-engaged. The enemy showed signs of great distress, one ship being on fire and one dropping astern. The destroyers at the head of the line emitted volumes of smoke, which covered the ships behind with a pall, and enabled them at 7.45 to turn away and pass out of Beatty's sight.

At 7.58 the 1st and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons were ordered to sweep westwards and locate the head of the enemy's line, and at 8.20 Beatty altered course to west to support. He located three battle cruisers or battleships, and engaged

them at 10,000 yards range. *Lion* repeatedly hit the leading ship, which turned away in flames with a heavy list to port, while *Princess Royal* set fire to one battleship, and the third ship, under the attack of *New Zealand* and *Indomitable*, hauled out of the line heeling over and on fire. Once more the mist descended and enveloped the enemy, which passed out of sight to the west. Then came a strange shock which sent a quiver through every British ship as if a mine or a shoal had been struck. Some great enemy vessel had blown up somewhere in the mist to the westward.

To turn to the Battle Fleet, which had become engaged at 6.17 p.m., during deployment, with battleships of the *Kaiser* class. It first took course south-east by east ; but as it endeavoured to close it bore round to westward. The aim of von Scheer now was escape and nothing but escape, and every device was used to screen his ships from British sight. Owing partly to the smoke palls and the clouds emitted by the destroyers, but mainly to the mist, it was never possible to see more than four or five enemy ships at a time. The ranges were, roughly, from 9,000 to 12,000 yards, and the action began with the British Battle Fleet on the enemy's bow. Under the British attack the enemy constantly turned away, and this had the effect of bringing Jellicoe to a position of less advantage on the enemy's quarter. At the same time it put the British fleet between von Scheer and his base.

In the short periods, however, during which the Germans were visible they received a heavy

fire and were constantly hit. Some were observed to haul out of line, and at least one was seen to sink. The German return fire at this stage was feeble, and the damage caused to our battleships was trifling. Von Scheer relied for defence chiefly on torpedo attacks, which were favoured by the weather and the British position. A following fleet can make small use of torpedoes, as the enemy is moving away from it ; while the enemy, on the other hand, has the advantage in this weapon, since his targets are moving towards him. Many German torpedoes were fired, but the only battleship hit was *Marlborough*, which was, happily, able to remain in line and continue the action.

The 1st Battle Squadron, under Sir Cecil Burney, came into action at 6.17 with the 3rd German Battle Squadron at a range of 11,000 yards ; but as the fight continued the range decreased to 9,000 yards. This squadron received most of the enemy's return fire, but it administered severe punishment. Take the case of *Marlborough* (Captain George P. Ross). At 6.17 she began by firing seven salvos at a ship of the *Kaiser* class ; she then engaged a cruiser and a battleship ; at 6.54 she was hit by a torpedo ; at 7.3 she reopened the action ; and at 7.12 fired fourteen salvos at a ship of the *Koenig* class, hitting her repeatedly till she turned out of line. *Colossus*, of the same squadron, was hit, but only slightly damaged, and several other ships were frequently straddled by the enemy's fire.

The 4th Battle Squadron, in the centre, was engaged with ships of the *Koenig* and the *Kaiser*

class,\* as well as with battle cruisers and light cruisers. Sir John Jellicoe's flagship, *Iron Duke*, engaged one of the *Koenig* class at 6.30 at a range of 12,000 yards, quickly straddled it, and hit it repeatedly from the second salvo onwards till it turned away. The 2nd Battle Squadron in the van, under Sir Thomas Jerram, was in action with German battleships from 6.30 to 7.20, and engaged also a damaged battle cruiser.

In the van of the Battle Fleet, acting as a link between Jellicoe and Beatty, went Rear-Admiral Heath's 2nd Cruiser Squadron, which had now received *Duke of Edinburgh* from the 1st Cruiser Squadron. There also was the 4th Light Cruiser Squadron, under Commodore Le Mesurier, which attacked enemy destroyers at 7.20 p.m., and again at 8.18, in support of the 11th Destroyer Flotilla. In the second attack it came under the fire of the enemy battle fleet at between 6,500 and 8,000 yards. *Calliope*, the flagship, was several times hit, but without serious damage. The light cruisers attacked the enemy with torpedoes, and at 8.40 an explosion was observed on board a ship of the *Kaiser* class. In these actions four enemy destroyers were sunk by our gun-fire.

By nine o'clock the enemy had completely disappeared, and darkness was falling fast. He had been veering round to a westerly course, and the whole British fleet lay between him and his home

\* The *Koenig* class before the action comprised *Grosser Kurfuerst*, *Kronprinz Markgraf*; the *Kaiser* class, *Friedrich der Grosse*, *Prinzregent Luitpold*, *Koenig Albert*, *Kaiserin*.

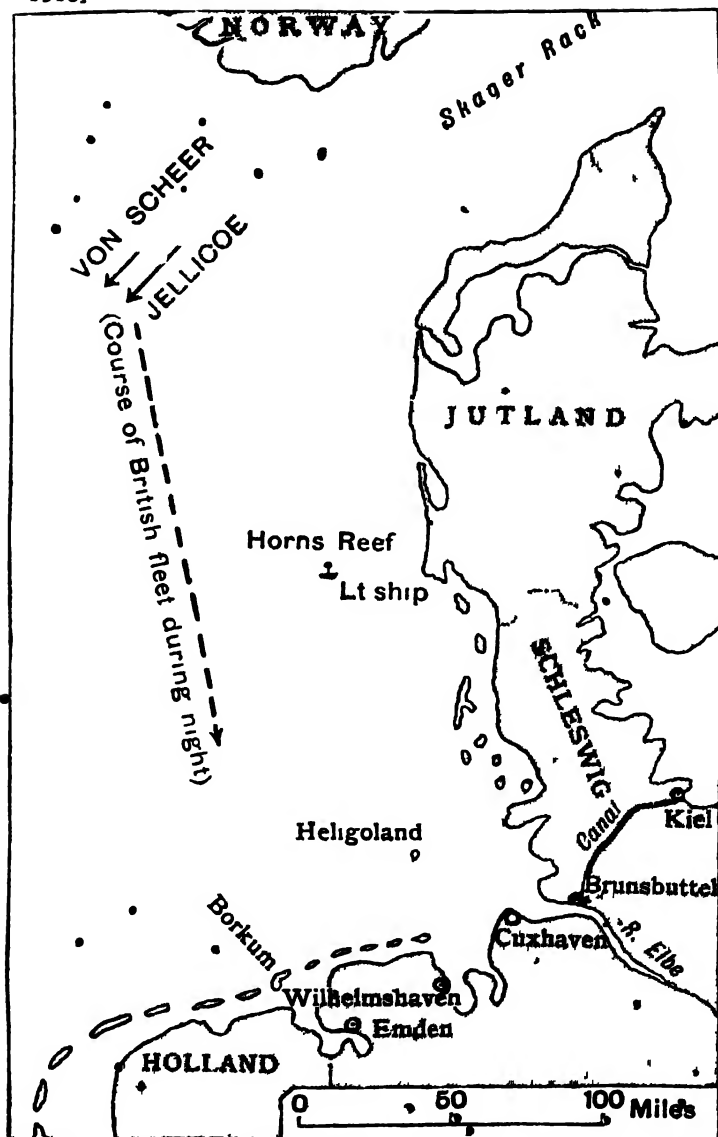
ports. It was a strategic situation which, but for the fog and the coming of night, would have meant his complete destruction. Sir John Jellicoe had now to make a difficult decision. It was impossible for the British fleet to close in the darkness in a sea swarming with torpedo craft and submarines, and accordingly he was compelled to make dispositions for the night, which would ensure the safety of his ships and provide for a renewal of the action at dawn. In his own words : " I manœuvred to remain between the enemy and his base, placing our flotillas in a position in which they would afford protection to the fleet from destroyer attack, and at the same time be favourably situated for attacking the enemy's heavier ships." About the same time Sir David Beatty, to the south and westward, had made the same decision on his own account. He informed Sir John Jellicoe of his position and the bearing of the enemy—and turned to the course of the Battle Fleet.

*The Fourth Stage—Night of May 31st–June 1st*

The night battle was waged on the British side entirely by the lighter craft. It will be remembered that Beatty had with him the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons, and the 1st, 9th, 10th, and 13th Destroyer Flotillas. The 1st and 3rd Light Cruiser Squadrons were continuously in touch with the battle cruisers, and usually ahead of them. There they protected the head of the British line from torpedo attack. The 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron was at the rear



1916]



Battle of Jutland.—General situation about sunset, May 31. Von Scheer driven off to S.W.—Jellicoe interposing between him and his naval bases.

of the battle line, and at 9 p.m. it repelled a destroyer attack upon Evan-Thomas's battleships. At 10.20 *Southampton* and *Dublin* were in action with five enemy cruisers, and lost many men during the fifteen minutes' fight. At half-past eleven *Birmingham* sighted several heavy ships steering south. These were some of the enemy battleships slipping past the British stern in the fog and darkness.

In the rear of the line were also *Fearless* and the 1st Destroyer Flotilla, which during the night observed a battleship of the *Kaiser* class utterly alone, and steaming at full speed. This solitary ship seems to have been attacked by destroyers farther astern, for presently from that direction came the noise of a heavy explosion. The 13th Flotilla, under Captain James Farie in *Champion*, was also astern of the Battle Fleet. At half-past twelve on the morning of 1st June a large vessel crossed its rear, opening a heavy fire as she passed on *Petard* and *Turbulent*. At 3.30 *Champion* was engaged with four enemy destroyers, and an hour before *Moresby* had fired a torpedo with success at four ships of the *Deutschland* class.

Beatty's destroyers having been in action since four o'clock in the afternoon, the principal attacks were made by the 4th, 11th, and 12th Flotillas, which accompanied Jellicoe, and which had had less continuous fighting. *Castor* (Commodore Hawkesley), in the 11th Flotilla, sank an enemy destroyer at point-blank range. The 12th Flotilla (Captain Anselan J. B. Stirling) attacked a

squadron of six large vessels, including some of the *Kaiser* class. The third ship in the line was torpedoed and blew up, and twenty minutes later the fourth ship in the line was also hit. *Onslaught*, of this flotilla, was severely damaged; but Sub-Lieutenant Kemmis and Midshipman Arnot, the only officers not disabled, took the ship out of action, and brought her safely home.

The heaviest fighting fell to the lot of the 4th Flotilla, under Captain Wintour. Two torpedoes were observed to take effect; but *Tipperary* was sunk, with the greater part of her crew. Captain Wintour was killed early in the action, when Lieutenant Kemp took command. Two rafts were got away from the sinking vessel, and a number of survivors from them were afterwards picked up; but the young lieutenant went down with his ship. The British destroyers, of all the vessels engaged in the battle, won perhaps the greatest glory. "They surpassed," wrote Sir John Jellicoe, "the very highest expectations that I had formed of them."

An officer on one of the flotillas has described that uneasy darkness: "We couldn't tell what was happening. Every now and then out of the silence would come *bang, bang, boom*, as hard as it could go for ten minutes on end. The flash of the guns lit up the whole sky for miles and miles, and the noise was far more penetrating than by day. Then you would see a great burst of flame from some poor devil, as the searchlight switched on and off, and then perfect silence once more."

The searchlights at times made the sea as white as marble, on which the destroyers moved "black," wrote an eye-witness, "as cockroaches on a floor."

At earliest dawn on 1st June the British fleet, which was lying south and west of the Horn Reef, turned northwards to collect its light craft, and to search for the enemy. But the enemy was not to be found. Partly he had slipped in single ships astern of our fleet during the night; partly he was then engaged in moving homewards like a flight of wild duck that has been scattered by shot. He was greatly helped by the weather, which at dawn on 1st June was thicker than the night before, the visibility being less than four miles. About four o'clock a Zeppelin passed over the British fleet, and no doubt by wireless signalled to any remaining German units where lay the safe passage. All morning till eleven o'clock Sir John Jellicoe waited on the battlefield, watching the lines of approach to German ports, and attending the advent of the enemy. But no enemy came. "I was reluctantly compelled to the conclusion," wrote Sir John, "that the High Sea Fleet had returned into port." Till 1.15 p.m. the British fleet swept the seas, picking up survivors from some of our lost destroyers. After that hour waiting was useless, so the fleet sailed for its bases, which were reached next day, Friday, 2nd June. There it fuelled and replenished with ammunition, and at 9.30 that evening was ready for further action.

*Results.*

The German fleet, being close to its bases, was able to publish at once its own version of the battle. A resounding success was a political necessity for Germany, and it is likely that she would have claimed a victory if any remnant of her fleets had reached harbour. As it was, she was overjoyed at having escaped annihilation, and the magnitude of her jubilation may be taken as the measure of her fears. It is of the nature of a naval action that it gives ample scope for fiction. There are no spectators. Victory and defeat are not followed, as in a land battle, by a gain or loss of ground. A well-disciplined country with a strict censorship can frame any tale it pleases, and stick to it for months without fear of detection at home. Moreover, she needed some fillip for her new loan. Accordingly Germany claimed at once a decisive success. According to her Press the death-blow had been given to Britain's command of the sea. The Kaiser soared into the realms of poetry. "The gigantic fleet of Albion, ruler of the seas, which, since Trafalgar, for a hundred years has imposed on the whole world a bond of sea tyranny, and has surrounded itself with a nimbus of invincibility, came into the field." That gigantic armada approached, and our fleet engaged it. The British fleet was beaten. The first great hammer-blow was struck, and the nimbus of British world supremacy disappeared." Germany announced trivial losses—one old battleship, *Pommern*; three small cruisers, *Wiesbaden*, *Elbing*,

and *Frauenlob* ; and five destroyers. A little later she admitted the loss of a battle cruiser, *Lutzow*, and the light cruiser *Rostock*, which at first she had kept secret "for political reasons."\*

It is a striking tribute to the prestige of the British navy that the German fairy tale was received with incredulity in all Allied and in most neutral countries. In a small mountain village in the Apennines, the inhabitants of which, owing to economic difficulties, had small enthusiasm for the war, the news arrived that the British navy had been beaten. "That is a lie," was the unanimous decision of the village ; "nothing on earth can defeat the British navy." But false news, once it has started, may be dangerous ; and in some quarters in America, even among friends of the Allies, there was at first a disposition to accept the German version. The ordinary man is apt to judge of a battle, whether on land or sea, by the crude test of losses. The British Admiralty announced its losses at once with a candour which may have been undiplomatic, but which revealed a proud confidence in the invulnerability of the navy and the steadfastness of the British people. These losses were : One first-class battle cruiser, *Queen Mary* ; two lesser battle cruisers, *Indefatigable* and *Invincible* ; three armoured cruisers, *Defence*, *Black Prince*, and *Warrior* ; and eight destroyers, *Tipperary*, *Ardent*, *Fortune*, *Shark*, *Sparrowhawk*, *Nestor*, *Nomad*,

\* The German official account of the action, published during June, was a tissue of careful falsifications.

and *Turbulent*. More vital than the ships was the loss of some thousands of gallant men, including some of the most distinguished of the younger admirals and captains.\*

Even if Germany's version of her losses had been true, it is scarcely necessary to say that they were heavier than Britain's in proportion to her total strength at sea. But her version was not true; it was not half the truth. The port of Wilhelmshaven was closed to the world, that no man might verify the actual casualties. It is probable that the *Pommern* whose loss was admitted was not the old *Pommern* of that name, which had been sunk by Commander Max Horton in the previous July, but a new first-class battleship. It is not yet possible to estimate the total German losses, owing to the conditions of low

\* The class and displacement of the lost ships were as follows:—

						Tons.
1.	<i>Queen Mary</i>	Battle Cruiser	.	.	.	27,000
2.	<i>Indefatigable</i>	" "	.	.	.	18,750
3.	<i>Invincible</i>	" "	.	.	.	17,250
4.	<i>Defence</i>	Armoured Cruiser	.	.	.	14,600
5.	<i>Black Prince</i>	" "	.	.	.	13,550
6.	<i>Warrior</i>	" "	.	.	.	13,550
7.	<i>Tipperary</i>	Destroyer	.	.	.	1,430
8.	<i>Ardent</i>	"	.	.	.	935
9.	<i>Fortune</i>	"	.	.	.	935
10.	<i>Shark</i>	"	.	.	.	935
11.	<i>Sparrowhawk</i>	"	.	.	.	935
12.	<i>Nestor</i>	"	.	.	.	1,000
13.	<i>Nomad</i>	"	.	.	.	1,000
14.	<i>Turbulent</i>	"	.	.	.	1,430
Total						113,300

## 258 The British Navy during the War [1916]

visibility during the day battle and the approach of darkness before the action was completed. Sir John Jellicoe, basing his calculations upon the results of careful inquiries, issued a list that in his opinion gave the minimum as to numbers. According to this list Germany lost two battleships of the largest class and one of the *Deutschland* type, one battle cruiser, five light cruisers, one of which may have been a battleship, six destroyers, and one submarine. These were certain and observed losses. In addition, one first-class battleship and one battle cruiser \* and three destroyers were seen to be so severely hit that in all likelihood they went down before reaching harbour. It should further be remembered that many of the ships which escaped were so seriously damaged by gunfire and torpedo attack that they would not be ~~available~~ for many months. The German fleet returned to the Elbe bases lacking some of its finest ships, and with most of the remainder temporarily out of action.†

It was only the ignorant who imagined that

\* Probably *Seydlitz* (24,610 tons).

† Taking the German losses at Sir John Jellicoe's lowest estimate we get:—

	Tons.
2 <i>Dreadnoughts</i> . . . . .	47,900
1 <i>Deutschland</i> . . . . .	13,200
1 Battle Cruiser, <i>Lutzow</i> . . . . .	28,000
5 Light Cruisers ( <i>Rostock</i> class) . . . . .	24,500
6 T.B.D.'s . . . . .	4,800
1 Submarine . . . . .	800
Total . . . . .	119,200



the loss of a few ships could mean a weakening of British naval prestige. A fleet, if it is to be better than scrap iron, must be risked gallantly when occasion offers. The real test of success is the fulfilment of a strategic intention. What was Germany's aim? Her major purpose was to destroy the British command of the ocean. In that she never came near succeeding. From the moment of von Scheer's return to port the British fleet held the sea. The blockade which Germany thought to break was drawn tighter than ever. Her secondary aim was so to weaken the British fleet that it should be more nearly on an equality with her own. Again she completely failed, and the margin of British superiority was in no way impaired. Lastly, she hoped to isolate and destroy a British division. That, too, failed. The British Battle Cruiser Fleet remained a living and effective force, while the German Battle Cruiser Fleet was only a shadow. The result of the battle of 31st May was that Britain was more confirmed than ever in her mastery of the waters. Its effect on the campaign at large was at once apparent. Russia was established in her control of the eastern Baltic, and the grandiose German scheme for aiding her Eastern campaign by sea perished in the smoke of the Jutland battle.

One word must be said upon British tactics and strategy. From a tactical point of view the battle appears as an example of a tactical division of a fleet undertaken in order to coax a laggard enemy to battle. Such a plan has, of course,

its own risks ; but without risks no admiral or general has ever won success. Criticism and discussion inevitably follow all naval actions, unless, as in the case of Nelson's three battles, they are so obviously conclusive that argument is futile. But if the Battle of Jutland had not the dramatic close of Trafalgar or the Nile, yet in a true sense it was decisive. It defeated, utterly defeated, the German plan. If it was not—as with two hours' more daylight it would have been—a complete destruction of Germany's sea power: it was a complete demonstration of Britain's crushing superiority. Sir David Beatty faced great odds and great difficulties in the spirit of Hawke and Nelson. "He once more showed," wrote the Commander-in-Chief, "his fine qualities of gallant leadership, firm determination, and correct strategical insight. He appreciated the situation at once on sighting his enemy's lighter forces, then his battle cruisers, and finally his battle fleet. I can fully sympathize with his feelings when the evening mist and failing light robbed the Fleet of that complete victory for which he had manoeuvred, and for which the vessels in company with him had striven so hard." It is a tradition of the British Admiralty that it praises sparingly, and only praises when the merit of an achievement is beyond question. The well-chosen words in which it approved Sir John Jellicoe's leadership were more impressive than the rhetoric of the chiefs of parvenu navies; "The results of the action prove that the officers and men of the Grand Fleet have known both how to study the

new problems with which they are confronted, and how to turn their knowledge to account. The expectations of the country were high ; they have been well fulfilled. My Lords desire to convey to you their full approval of your proceedings in this action."

Not less conspicuous than the leadership was the amazing fighting quality of the British sailors. It was more than a century since Britain had had the opportunity of a first-class naval action, and it may confidently be said that not even at Trafalgar did the spirit of her seamen shine more brightly. The story of the fighting of a battleship like *Marlborough*, a cruiser like *Southampton*, and destroyers like *Tipperary*, *Onslow*, and *Defender*, will become part of our national epic. It is no case for the flowers of rhetoric. Such a spirit is best praised, not in the literary epithets of the historian, but in the simple and heartfelt tribute of the man who guided it. "The conduct of officers and men," wrote Sir John Jellicoe, "throughout the day and night actions was entirely beyond praise. No words of mine can do them justice. On all sides it is reported to me that the glorious traditions of the past were most worthily upheld, whether in heavy ships, cruisers, light cruisers, or destroyers—the same admirable spirit prevailed. Officers and men were cool and determined, with a cheeriness that would have carried them through anything. The heroism of the wounded was the admiration of all. I cannot adequately express the pride with which the spirit of the Fleet filled me."

Following close upon the greatest naval fight of history came the news of a sea tragedy which cost Britain the life of her foremost soldier. It had been arranged that Lord Kitchener should undertake a mission to Russia to consult with the Russian commanders as to the coming Allied offensive, and to arrange certain details of policy concerning the supply of munitions. The party consisted, among others, of Sir Frederick Donaldson of the Ministry of Munitions ; General Ellershaw ; Colonel Fitzgerald, Lord Kitchener's military secretary ; and Mr. H. J. O'Beirne of the Foreign Office, who was regarded as the ablest of our younger diplomats. On Monday evening they embarked in the armoured cruiser *Hampshire* (Captain Herbert Savill), which had returned three days before from the Battle of Jutland. About 8 p.m. that evening the ship sank in wild weather on the western coast of the Orkneys, either from striking a floating mine or one of the knife-edged under-water reefs of those parts. Four boats left the vessel, but all were overturned. One or two survivors were washed ashore on the inhospitable coast ; but of Lord Kitchener and his colleagues no word was ever heard again.

The news of his death filled the whole Empire with profound sorrow, and the shock was felt no less by our Allies, who saw in him one of the great protagonists of their cause. The British army went into mourning, and all classes of the community were affected with a grief which had scarcely been paralleled since the death of Queen Victoria. Labour leader, trade-union delegate,

and the patron of the conscientious objector were as heartfelt in their regret as his professional colleagues or the army which he had created. He died on the eve of the main Allied offensive, and did not live to see the consummation of his labours. But in a sense his work was finished, for more than any other man he had the credit of building up that vast British force which was destined to be the determining factor in the war.

## CHAPTER " XIII

## TWO YEARS OF THE WAR

THE Battle of the North Sea was fought on 24th January, 1915. Had anyone on that day prophesied that sixteen months would elapse without another naval action he would have found few anywhere to accept his forecast, and none in the British navy. Our sailors looked confidently for many German raids, which should culminate in the appearance of the High Sea Fleet. But the time was one of watching and waiting. Battleships were indeed employed in the luckless Gallipoli venture, and suffered many losses; but that was not the engagement of ships with ships, but of ships against forts and land entrenchments. Our armed auxiliaries scoured the seas and controlled neutral traffic; our mine-sweepers were busy at their thankless task from the Pentland Firth to the Channel, from the Shetlands to the Scillies; our gunboats and patrol boats hunted submarines in many waters, from the North Sea to the Dardanelles; our cruiser squadrons kept tireless watch, sweeping the sea by night and day; but our battle cruisers and capital ships had many weary months to wait for the chance that came so tardily. We had to pay the penalty of the success we had won in the first six months of war. The enemy was driven

to rely more upon his small arms than upon his great guns, and the warfare he preferred was waged in secret and in the dark. We were condemned to the offensive-defensive, as troops who have carried a vital position are compelled to consolidate their ground and thrust back the counter-attack. Hence from the Battle of the North Sea to the Battle of Jutland the history of the war at sea was a history of losses. We were repelling the enemy's assault, and for the most part waging war in our own country rather than carrying it into his.

The German naval policy was not ill-conceived. It failed, but it was not futile. As planned by von Tirpitz \* and von Pohl, † it showed a shrewd perception of the economic vulnerability of Britain. In the long run, they argued, it was only the merchant shipping of the world, whether owned by Allies or neutrals, which could checkmate the great German scheme of conquest. It alone could enable their enemies to perfect their equipment and create a fighting machine equal to that of Germany. Germany had lost her mercantile marine, but then it was less vital to her purpose. If the Allied

\* Von Tirpitz on 15th March, 1916, was said to be prevented by illness from performing his ordinary work. On the following day it was announced that he had resigned the office of Secretary of State for the Imperial Navy, and had been succeeded by his former assistant, Admiral von Capelle. The Battle of Jutland was therefore fought under a new *régime*.

† Von Pohl retired from the command of the High Sea Fleet in January, 1916, and died a few weeks later. He was succeeded by Admiral von Scheer.

shipping could be seriously crippled, there might arise this quandary : either Britain must curtail her military operations, which demanded many ships, or she would find her revenues shrinking seriously from lack of trade and her population gravely distressed from shortage of food and the vast increase of prices. The Allies were using some 3,000 merchant vessels for the purposes of war ; and if Germany could make heavy inroads on the remainder she might effect a vast naval success without the sacrifice of one battleship.

In framing this policy von Tirpitz counted upon two possibilities, which failed. He was using as weapons the mine and the submarine, to which there had up to date been no effective antidote devised. He hoped, therefore, to create a panic among Allied seamen, so that merchantmen would limit their activities at the mere threat of danger. He believed, too, that the British Admiralty would be slow to discover any means of defence and reprisal. In both forecasts he was over-sanguine, but not wholly wrong. There was no panic, and our navy speedily organized a counter-campaign which achieved considerable success against the earlier submarines, and to the end kept the German onslaught from the success upon which the enemy counted. But the merit of von Tirpitz's scheme was that when the thoughts of the Allies dwelt only on armies and navies, he foresaw the economic necessities at the back of armed strength, and struck at them. If he did not succeed, he certainly incommoded his foes.



Up to the end of 1915, largely owing to his submarine campaign, nearly 1,000 Allied and neutral ships had been put out of use. Unfortunately, these losses could not be replaced with any readiness. It was different in the Napoleonic wars, when every little English port had its local shipbuilder; but in these days of iron and steel vessels of large tonnage there was none of this decentralized construction, and we could not make good the decline in our carrying capacity due to the withdrawal of many large ships for direct war work and to the losses of mine and submarine. The consequence was that freights rose very high. If we compare 1914 and 1915, we find the freights of Burmese rice increased from 21s. to 150s. per ton; Calcutta jute from 18s. to 152s.; Argentine wheat from 18s. to 150s. Even deducting the excess profits tax of 50 per cent., the net profits of the shipping industry increased by 543 per cent. One calculation, covering the first nineteen months of war, put the increased cost to the nation at £400,000,000.

Nor was the German offensive confined to blows at civilian trade. By means of mine-laying on a large scale von Tirpitz hoped slowly to reduce the strength of our fleet, with no corresponding loss to his own. Moreover, his submarines took an active part in the only naval campaign in the year from January, 1915—that in the Eastern Mediterranean. There the achievements of von Bersing and others furnished a brilliant page in the still scanty chronicles of submarine war. The Eastern Mediterranean was no doubt an

ideal ground for such operations, for our task of provisioning and reinforcing by sea a large army provided endless easy targets. But the journey thither, and the provision of bases in out-of-the-way islands and odd corners of the African coast were enterprises which did credit to the new service. "It was hastily assumed by many people in Britain that the narrow entrance to the Mediterranean would enable us to detect and check the approach of submarines. But the nine miles of the Strait of Gibraltar were nearly a thousand feet deep, and their strong currents made netting impossible.

The main naval interest of the Allies in 1915 and 1916 may therefore be set down as the perfecting of means of defence against mine and submarine, and the endeavour to make the enemy's attack ~~as~~ as little costly as possible to themselves, and as difficult and burdensome as possible to him. The record of the first year was one of losses on both sides—losses the majority of which fell on the Allies. But, taking into account the nature of von Tirpitz's plan and the end which he had set himself, it may fairly be said that the balance of success was not with the attack.

In an earlier chapter we have chronicled our battleship disasters in the Dardanelles, where France lost the *Bouvet*, and we the *Irresistible*, the *Queen*, the *Goliath*, the *Triumph*, and the *Majestic*. The year passed without any further wastage of capital ships, but on 9th January, 1916, the pre-Dreadnought battleship *King Edward*

VII.\* struck a mine in the North Sea and sank, happily without loss of life. The list was heavier in armoured cruisers. The *Argyll*, a ship of an old class, with a speed of 22 knots, and four 7.5-inch guns, stranded on the Scottish coast on 28th October, 1915. On 30th December the *Natal*, one of the best gunnery ships in the navy, was mysteriously blown up in harbour, and lost out of her ship's company over 300 officers and men. On 11th February, 1916, the light cruiser *Arethusa*, which had played a great part in the Battle of the Bight of Heligoland as the parent ship of the destroyer flotillas, and had been in action during the Cuxhaven raid and the battle of 24th January, 1915, struck a mine off the East Coast, and was lost. She was the first oil-driven cruiser in the Fleet, and bore one of the most historic names in our naval history.

The losses among destroyers were few, since their speed made them comparatively safe from submarines. The *Maori* was mined off the Belgian coast, the *Lynx* in the North Sea, and the *Louis* stranded in the Eastern Mediterranean. The *Coquette* was sunk by a mine, and the *Eden* in a collision. Of submarines we could trace the loss of eight—four, the E15, the A2, the E7, and the E20, in the Dardanelles or Sea of Marmora; two, the E3 and the D5, in the North Sea; one, the E13, in the Baltic; and one in January, 1916,

\* She had been launched in 1903, had a displacement of 16,350 tons, a speed of 19 knots, and carried an armament of four 12-inch, four 9.2-inch, and ten 6-inch guns.

wrecked on the Dutch coast. The British losses in torpedo boats was small—two torpedoed in the North Sea, one sunk in collision in the Strait of Gibraltar, and one lost by mine.

The largest roll was that of armed merchantmen and fleet auxiliaries, whose size and constant keeping of the sea made them specially vulnerable to mine and submarine. In January, 1915, the *Viknor* sank off the coast of Ireland. In February, it was followed by the *Clan Macnaughton*, and in March by the *Bayano*. In May the *Princess Irene* was blown up at Sheerness; in August the *Ramsey* was sunk by gun-fire in the North Sea; in September the *India* was torpedoed in the North Sea. In October the *Hythe*, a mine-sweeper, was sunk in collision at the Dardanelles, and next month the *Tura*, an armed boarding steamer, was torpedoed. On 10th February, 1916, four mine-sweepers near the Dogger Bank were attacked by German destroyers, and one of them, the *Arabis*, was sunk—an episode which was represented in the German press as a victory over enemy cruisers. In March the *Fauvette* was lost by mine.

Transports, too, made an easy mark. In September, 1915, the *Royal Edward* was torpedoed in the Ægean Sea, with the loss of over a thousand men, mostly drafts for the 29th Division at Gallipoli. In the same month, and in the same waters, the *Ramazan* was sunk by gun-fire, and three hundred perished. In October the *Marquette*, carrying Indian troops, was torpedoed, with the loss of a hundred; and in November the *Mercian*,

carrying yeomanry, was shelled for several hours by a submarine, but was able to escape with over a hundred killed and injured. To this list may be added the British hospital ship *Anglia*, which on 17th November struck a mine in the Channel, and sank with considerable loss of life.

The losses among mercantile shipping need not be detailed. Up to 31st October, 1915, from the outbreak of war, 264 British merchant ships, aggregating half a million tons, and 158 fishing vessels had been destroyed by enemy action. From the ordinary accidents of the sea we had lost during the same period 167 steamships, 229 sailing ships, and 144 fishing vessels.\* The most

\* The Admiralty issued the following lists of unarmed British and neutral vessels sunk during 1915 without warning by enemy submarines :—

## BRITISH

Jan. 30 . . Tokomaru	April 18 . . Vanilla
Feb. 15 . . Dulwich	May 1 . . Edale
Feb. 20 . . Cambank	May 3 . . Minterne
Feb. 23 . . Branksome Chine	May 6 . . Centurion
Feb. 23 . . Oakby	May 7 . . Lusitania
Feb. 24 . . Western Coast	May 18 . . Drunchree
Feb. 24 . . Rio Parana	May 19 . . Dumfries
Feb. 24 . . Harpalion	June 1 . . Saidieh
Mar. 7 . . Bengrove	June 4 . . Inkum
Mar. 9 . . Blackwood	June 8 . . Strathcarron
Mar. 9 . . Princess Victoria	June 12 . . Leuctra
Mar. 11 . . Florazan	June 15 . . Strathnairn
Mar. 13 . . Invergyle	June 28 . . Dumfriesshire
Mar. 18 . . Glenartney	July 28 . . Mangara
Mar. 21 . . Carintorr	Aug. 1 . . Fulgens
Mar. 22 . . Concord	Aug. 10 . . Rosalie
April 1 . . Seven Seas	Aug. 16 . . Serbino
April 4 . . City of Bremen	Aug. 19 . . Arabic
April 10 . . Harpalyce	Sept. 12 . . Ashmore
April 15 . . Ptarmigan	Nov. 19 . . Hallamshire

conspicuous losses were the *Lusitania* on 7th May, the *Armenian* on 28th June, the *Iberian* on 30th July, the *Arabic* on 19th August, the *Hesperian* on 4th September, and the *Persia* on 30th December. Two Japanese vessels were also sunk in the Eastern Mediterranean, with the result that Japan sent warships to those waters. The sinking of the Italian liner *Ancona* (8th November) was attended with peculiar brutality. She was bound from Naples to New York, carrying Greek and Italian emigrants with their families. While passing to the south of Sardinia a submarine appeared and began to shell her. Even after she had stopped the shelling continued. A wild panic was the result; many were killed on the decks by shrapnel; women and children flung themselves pell-mell into the boats, and while there were subjected to the fire of the submarine. Finally a torpedo was discharged, and the ship sank. Over two hundred persons perished in this outrage. The submarine flew the Austrian flag, and the

## NEUTRAL

February 19 . . .	Belridge	Norwegian
March 13 . . .	Hannah	Swedish
April 3 . . .	Douro	Portuguese
April 14 . . .	Folke	Swedish
April 15 . . .	Katwijk	Dutch
April 17 . . .	Ellisfontos	Greek
May 2 . . .	Gulflight	American
May 7 . . .	Ellen	Swedish
May 25 . . .	Nebraskan	American
May 26 . . .	Betty	Danish
June 9 . . .	Svein Jarl	Norwegian
July 14 . . .	Rym	Norwegian
August 18 . . .	Magda	Norwegian
August 27 . . .	Uranus	Swedish

Government of Vienna acknowledged it as their own ; but there is good reason to believe that it was in reality a German boat, and that the Austrian flag was used to avoid further complications with America, and to prevent a declaration of war by Italy on Germany. The tale was one of the most horrid in the campaign, and no explanation could relieve its barbarism.

Insult was added to injury by an extraordinary request made by Vienna on 7th December that special preparations should be made to protect from submarine risks certain Austro-Hungarian subjects being conveyed from India by the British steamer *Golconda*, on the ground that the majority of them were "better-class people." The request gave the world an insight into the strange, perverted mentality of the Teutonic Powers. Sir Edward Grey replied with vigour and point :—

" I am at a loss to know why ' better-class ' people should be thought more entitled to protection from submarine attack than any other non-combatants. But however that may be, the only danger of the character indicated which threatens any of the passengers in the *Golconda*, is one for which the Austro-Hungarian and the German Governments are alone responsible. It is they, and they only, who have instituted and carry on a novel and inhuman form of warfare, which disregards all the hitherto accepted principles of international law and necessarily endangers the lives of non-combatants. By asking for special precautions to protect one of their own subjects on board a British merchant vessel, the Austro-Hungarian Government recognizes what are the inevitable consequences of its submarine policy, and admits that the outrages, by which the *Lusitania*, the *Persia*, and numbers of other ships have been sunk without warning,

were not the result of the casual brutalities of the officers of enemy submarines, but part of the settled and premeditated policy of the Governments whom they serve."

The sinking of the *Persia*, which had on board the American Consul at Aden, who travelled under a safe-conduct from Germany and Austria, was attended with the loss of nearly two hundred lives. The vessel was torpedoed during the luncheon hour, and sank in five minutes. One of the most remarkable escapes in the story of the sea was that of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu, who, with ten other survivors, reached Malta when all hope of his survival had been abandoned. They were in a boat which had been badly crushed, and could only be kept afloat by the most delicate trimming. The weather and the water were bitterly cold, they suffered horribly from thirst, and several dropped off or went mad during the first night. They had no means of signalling to any passing steamer. Late in the evening of the second day the one chance in a thousand occurred, and a vessel was discerned making straight towards them. The castaways attracted the attention of the crew; but no boats could be lowered, and under Lord Montagu's direction the ship lay to so as to bring herself alongside the *debris* of the boat. The rescue was made after the survivors had spent thirty-two hours without food or drink in a winter sea.

The German losses were naturally smaller; for, except in the Baltic, the German warships did not keep the seas, and there was no German commerce left to destroy. One battleship—the



*Pommern* \*—a vessel ten years old, with a displacement of about 13,000 tons, four 11-inch guns, and fourteen 6.7-inch guns, was torpedoed in the Baltic by Commander Max Horton on 2nd July; six transports in the same waters fell to British submarines; and in the Battle of the Gulf of Riga on 20th August, 1915, Germany suffered losses in destroyers and cruisers of which the details are not yet clear. With the assistance of British submarines, under commanders like Max Horton and Noel Laurence, Russia throughout 1915 dominated the Eastern Baltic.

• In cruisers and battle-cruisers Germany had already lost heavily—the *Scharnhorst*, *Gneisenau*, *Yorck*, *Magdeburg*, *Köln*, *Mainz*, *Nürnberg*, *Leipzig*, *Ariadne*, *Emden*, *Karlsruhe*. In the early months of 1915 the list was increased by the *Bluecher*, *Dresden*, and *Koenigsberg*. In October the *Prinz Adalbert*, in November the *Undine*, and in December the *Bremen* were sunk in the Baltic. Nine destroyers and seven torpedo boats seem to have been lost during 1915. In the class of armed merchantmen and auxiliaries, the *Macedonia* was captured in March at Las Palmas, and the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* and the *Prinz Eitel Friedrich* were interned in an American port. The mine-layer *Albatross* went ashore at Göthland in July, and in August the *Meteor* was blown up in the North Sea. Against Turkey our offensive was remarkable. If the guns of the Dardanelles forts

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\* The *Pommern*, the loss of which the Germans admitted in the great battle of 31st May, 1916, was almost certainly a brand-new vessel of the largest type.

and the German submarines took heavy toll of our large vessels, our submarines in the Straits and in the Marmora played havoc with Turkish shipping. Down to October in those waters we had sunk two battleships, five gunboats, one torpedo boat, and 197 supply ships.

It is too soon to write the detailed story of our campaign against the German submarines. The Admiralty rightly refused to publish even the estimated numbers destroyed—a refusal which showed an acute knowledge of the enemy's psychology. A sinister silence, without a word of news, was far more trying to the nerves of the German under-sea service than any advertisement of success. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico*. Famous submarine commanders went out and never returned. No man setting forth from the Elbe ~~base~~ knew what he had to face. Some device which meant certain death might be waiting for him in the British coastal waters. A few of our methods of defence were known to the world. The new type of monitors—vast, torpedo-proof rafts carrying 14-inch guns—were able to operate in shallow seas with almost complete immunity from the under-water menace. Elaborate nets were constructed in the main sea-passages, in which more than one submarine was fatally entangled. We know from the narrative of Lieutenant Wenninger, commanding the German boat U17, what might happen to a submarine which fouled these steel meshes. Even when he managed to get clear, he had to lie for hours at the bottom while our torpedo boats watched the surface.

Of our direct offensive few details were given to the world. Sometimes an aeroplane was the weapon. On 26th August, 1915, Squadron-Commander Bigsworth detected a submarine off Ostend, and bombed it from a height of 500 feet. In November Flight-Lieutenant Viney fell in with a U boat off the Belgian coast, and destroyed it. But on the main work of offence history must still be silent. It was conducted by hundreds of patrol boats, manned largely by fishermen, and the submarine was tracked and followed as the old whalers pursued the ringer. Science was called to our aid, and by means of improved microphones we became adepts at detecting the presence of the enemy under water. When the war is over, it is likely that from the doings of our patrols and their quarries will be written some of the strangest romances of peril and courage in all human history. For the present we can only set down the general result. In spite of many losses our commerce had not been seriously crippled; there was no hint of panic among our sea-going folk; and we had organized a counter-campaign which had left Germany aghast. It was not so much that we had depleted her submarine fleet, for her new constructions filled the gaps, but that we had put an end to many of the best and most unreplaceable of her submarine commanders, and diffused over the whole business of attack that atmosphere of terror and uncertainty which should, on Germany's calculation, have been the lot of the defence. The German navy, which had looked for immediate success, was driven to counsel

patience with a wry mouth. "Only a child," wrote Captain Persius in the *Berliner Tageblatt*, "would accuse the British of being bad seamen. They know how to defend themselves, and have devised every kind of protection. It becomes more and more difficult for U boats to get near enough to hostile ships to launch a torpedo. An almost miraculous skill is required to avoid all snares, escape from destroyers, and yet make a successful attack."

One incident in the submarine campaign deserves special notice, because of its use by Germany to found a charge of barbarism against British seamen. So far as can be ascertained, the facts in the *Baralong* case were these. Early in the afternoon of 19th August, 1915, the steamer *Nicosian*, with a cargo of army mules, was approaching the Irish coast some sixty miles from Queenstown. There she fell in with the German U boat which a few hours before had sunk the *Arabic*. A torpedo was fired, which struck the *Nicosian*, but without sinking her, upon which the submarine began to shell. Thereupon the captain and crew put off in a boat; but the American cattlemen who had come over in charge of the mules, having no experience of the ways of submarines, remained on board. The captain of the U boat, desiring to economize his torpedoes, sent a boarding party to finish off the *Nicosian* with bombs.

At that moment the *Baralong* arrived on the scene. She had been got up as a tramp, and was probably destined by the U boat as its next

victim ; but as she approached she stripped off her disguise, and revealed herself as an armed auxiliary, with the men waiting at their guns. She opened musketry fire on the submarine, and then split her in two with shots from her port and stern guns. Upon this the German captain and the rest of the crew put off in a boat to the *Nicosian*, intending, no doubt, to surrender there.

The *Baralong*, as it watched the submarine sink, was presently made aware that strange things were happening on the *Nicosian*. The American cattlemen, whose temper had not been improved by the shelling, observed that the boarding-party in the first boat were carrying bombs. Divining their intention, they resolved to make a fight for the ship. They allowed the German seamen to climb on board, and then rushed on them and battered in their heads with furnace bars. Presently in the second boat came the captain and the rest of the crew. They, too, were hunted up and down the ship and disposed of. When a British officer arrived from the *Baralong* he found no Germans left. The *Nicosian's* captain and crew rejoined her, and the vessel proceeded to Avonmouth.

After that the tale becomes obscure. The German Government produced a number of sworn statements by cattlemen, alleging that the men of the *Baralong* murdered the crew of the submarine as they were struggling in the water. Whether there was some false swearing out of fear of the consequences, or whether the whole thing was concocted by Count Bernstorff, did not appear.

The only signatory whose antecedents we were able to examine was not even at sea when the events of which he claimed to be an eye-witness occurred. Germany demanded the trial of the men of the *Baralong* for murder. Sir Edward Grey answered that he was very willing that the matter should be investigated by a tribunal composed of American naval officers, provided that Germany agreed to allow the investigation by the same court of the circumstances connected with the sinking of the *Arabic*, the attack on the stranded submarine E13 in Dutch waters, and the firing on the crew of the steamer *Ruel* after they had taken to the boats. Germany replied that the three last affairs were not *in pari materia* with the first; and announced that, since Britain refused to make amends for the *Baralong* outrage, "the German Government feels itself compelled to take into its own hands the punishment of this unexpiated crime, and to adopt retaliatory measures." What these could be it was difficult to guess, for you cannot proceed to stronger measures when you have consistently practised the last extremes of outrage. Germany had accused Britain of abandoning the first rule of warfare—to spare an enemy when he is out of action. To this charge Sir Edward Grey replied:—

"The German Government are in error. It is true that, in the opinion of his Majesty's Government, German methods of submarine warfare are barbarous and illegal; it is true that, acting under their Government's orders, German sailors have bombarded open towns; have ruthlessly drowned men, women, and children—neutrals as well as belligerents; it

is also true that what German sailors have done the German Press has loudly applauded. But it is not true that the British Admiralty have ever desired to retaliate by refusing mercy to 'an enemy who has been put out of action.' Were it otherwise, indeed, neither the German Government nor the German people would have just ground for complaint. It is not in consideration for their deserts that the Admiralty reject it. They reject it because in their opinion it is inconsistent with the traditions of the service for which they are responsible. To destroy an enemy who surrenders has never been the practice of the British navy; nor do they now propose to vary their methods of warfare merely because they find themselves in conflict with opponents whose views of honour and humanity are different from their own."

The blockade of Germany maintained by British warships was one of our chief weapons in the campaign, but it could not be maintained without considerable friction with neutrals. In March, 1915, the British Government declared a blockade of Germany—a blockade which, since it could not be made fully effective, was not in accord with the accepted principles of international law. It decreed the seizure and confiscation of non-contraband goods of German origin, ownership, or destination carried in neutral ships to neutral ports, though Britain did not propose to apply the rule with any technical rigour. This practice involved a considerable breach of the recognized code of maritime law, a breach which Britain justified by the exceptional character of the circumstances and by the international anarchism of Germany, and defended on the precedent of the novel methods adopted by America during the Civil War. There was a great

deal to be said for the British contention ; there was much to be said for the American counter-plea. But obviously so grave a matter could not depend only on the argumentation of international lawyers and the Foreign Offices which employed them. The plain facts were that America was seriously affected by British policy in perhaps her most vital interest—her cotton export. She saw her trade with enemy countries and to some extent with neutral countries hampered, and this on a plea which was manifestly at variance with accepted international practice. It did not convince the Southern planter to be told that the North in the Civil War also had done something in the way of rewriting international law. America was on strong ground, and she knew it, and she pressed her claims with much force during the summer months. It was gradually becoming apparent that the British plan, though reasonable enough in itself, would have to be modified.

Cotton was the chief difficulty, and three steps were pressed upon the Government as a solution. The first was to declare cotton contraband. It was clear that it was a most vital munition of war, since it was practically essential to the manufacture of nitro-cellulose, the basis of most modern propellant charges. It was perfectly true that to declare cotton contraband would have given us no weapon to restrict its import to Germany beyond what we had at present, though we should have been able not only to stop but to confiscate cargoes. But, combined with the doctrine of continuous voyage, it would have given us an



authority which America could recognize. Such were the difficulties which it raised with America on points of law; towards the end of 1915 it was no less criticized by the British people on the point of fact. Critics urged that it was ineffective. Figures were quoted showing the enormously increased imports of the neutral countries adjoining Germany, principally in the way of foodstuffs. Our ring-fence was condemned as a farce, and the Foreign Office—which was not unnaturally suspected as the sole begetter of the unfortunate Declaration of London—was enjoined to hand over the blockade to the sailors, who meant business.

When these suggestions were examined they were found to fall under two heads. The first was the proposal to regularize our proceedings according to international law, and thereby placate the legally-minded America. It was urged that there was nothing to prevent a large extension of our list of absolute and conditional contraband, since we had thrown over the Declaration of London. Further, we might now declare a legal blockade. Even if it had been impossible before—which was not admitted by those who saw in the Baltic a "closed sea" on a parallel with the American Great Lakes—the success of our submarines in those waters had enabled us now to make it effective. Ever since the summer, there had been a real blockade of the German Baltic ports. We had wrecked there both the commerce and the troop transport of the enemy. It was difficult to find German or Swedish underwriters to undertake

the risk. German ships had for the most part to keep within territorial waters, and this greatly increased the slowness and the risks of their voyages. The Danish press—which may be taken as an independent witness—had no doubt about the effectiveness in point of fact of the British Baltic blockade.

Why a formal blockade was not proclaimed by the Government was to many a mystery ; but the answer seems to have been that it would have given us no powers which we had not already arrogated, and the proclamation, while it might satisfy a few jurists, would make the situation still more delicate with regard to European neutrals. It was also urged that while a blockade would stop enemy trade, it would not touch neutral trade, and it was precisely with neutral trade that the trouble arose. This brings us to the second ground of criticism—that by way of adjacent neutrals a large amount of vital imports was still filtering through to Germany. It was possible for the Government to show that the figures of the critics were grossly exaggerated ; but the fact remained that Germany was making desperate attempts to get sea-borne food and raw materials for the purposes of war, and that our activities, while they had diminished this influx, had by no means put an end to it.

The critics could more easily prove the unpleasant fact than suggest a policy to prevent it. Talk about handing over the whole business to the navy had little meaning, for before the navy could act it must be given directions, and these

directions were exactly what it was so hard to arrive at. What seemed to be in the mind of the critics was the action of Britain in the Napoleonic wars, when we stopped all commerce to the continent of Europe. But at that time the whole of Europe was openly or implicitly hostile, and unless we now wished to bring in all neutrals against us, this heroic remedy could scarcely be adopted. With Sweden, in particular, our relations were highly delicate; and Russia had no desire to see Sweden enter the field against the Allies, and appear with an army in Finland on her right rear. In his speech in the House of Commons on 26th January, 1916, Sir Edward Grey put the point clearly:—

“ If you establish lines of blockade, you must do it consistently with the rights of neutrals. You cannot establish these lines of blockade and say that no ships will go through them at all, or you will stop all traffic of any kind to the neutral ports inside. You would stop all traffic to Christianja, Stockholm, Rotterdam, Copenhagen—all traffic whatever. Well, of course, that is not consistent with the rights of neutrals. You cannot shut off all supplies to neutral countries. You must not try to make the grass grow in the streets of neutral ports. You must let through these lines vessels *bona fide* destined for the neutral ports, with *bona fide* cargoes. Nor can you put every cargo in your Prize Courts and say it has not to go to a neutral port until the Prize Court has examined it. The congestion in this country would be such that you could not deal with it if you did that, and you have no right to say that the British Prize Court is the neck of the bottle through which all trade has to pass. If we had gone, or attempted to go, as far as that, I think the war possibly might be over by now; but it would have been over because the whole world would have risen against us, and we, and

## 286 The British Navy during the War (1915-16)

our Allies too, would have collapsed under the general resentment of the whole world."

There remained, then, to discriminate between neutral imports intended for neutral use and those which might be passed on to the enemy. Such discrimination was obviously a task of immense intricacy, and involved the certainty of many mistakes. The principle of "rationing" a neutral was accepted, but this method had many grave drawbacks. If the imports prior to the war were taken as the basis, then this involved not only imports required for home consumption, but those re-exported to Germany to meet the balance of trade. It permitted, for example, the German acquisition of foodstuffs, and so was in defiance of the preamble of the Order in Council of 11th March, 1915, which announced that "His Majesty had decided to adopt further measures to prevent commodities of any kind from reaching or leaving Germany." Again, if the imports of a neutral were to be rationed on this basis, why not the exports of a neutral such as the United States? If the basis were the home consumption of a particular article, then the following situation might occur. The limit from the point of view of our blockade might be reached early in any year, through a number of ships arriving in neutral ports carrying that article part of which was secretly destined for Germany. Cargoes arriving later, honestly destined for neutral consumption, we should be compelled to turn back or confiscate.

To meet these difficulties, we arranged central distributing agencies in the neutral states which

had the direction of all consignments. They were responsible to us for the behaviour of their own merchants, and they formed authoritative bodies with which we could negotiate, and arrange from week to week the details of lawful commerce. It was by no means a perfect scheme ; but in the circumstances, when we could only seek a balance of difficulties, it was probably the best possible. In the words of Lord Robert Cecil, who in February, 1916, entered the Cabinet as Minister of Blockade, we could stop up the holes in the dam as they appeared ; but it was inevitable that a good deal of water should run through while the repairs were being made. A blockade offers immense inducements to smuggling, and so long as human nature continues what it is there will be attempts to break it.

The criticism of our blockade policy was soon extended to other naval matters. On one point it was amply justified. The merchant shipping question had been allowed to drift, so that freights had risen to a crazy height, and shipowners made altogether excessive profits. It was urged that shipping companies should be made " controlled establishments," so that the whole of their surplus earnings might be taken for the nation ; but this plan, while it might have augmented our revenue, would not have met the real difficulty. It would have been well if the shipping trade had been taken over by the Government, who would have paid it a fixed rate of interest on its capital and drawn up a reasonable schedule of freights. Neutral freights had naturally followed the British

lead, and risen to the same extravagant height, and it was idle to hope to lower them by any of the devices proposed—such as, for example, making their coaling facilities in the ports of the Empire depend upon their adherence to a tariff—unless our British scale was lowered and systematized. The reason why some such step was not taken seems to be found in the departmentalism which is rampant in any time of stress. Every great question is interdepartmental, and no one will be settled speedily or wisely unless there is a strong central authority to colligate and harmonize the claims of the departments.

Finally, in the early days of March, the critics fastened upon naval policy itself—not, indeed, the work of the Fleets and the fighting Admirals, but the alleged supineness of the Board of Admiralty in new construction. Mr. Churchill returned from his battalion in the trenches to make a speech full of dark innuendoes, concluding with a demand for the reinstatement of Lord Fisher at Whitehall. He had a slender parliamentary and journalistic following, but those who most admired his courage and mental alertness could not but regret so ill-advised a performance. Since May, 1915, it was not too much to say, for the first time for many years naval policy had been settled by the navy itself. Mr. Balfour was admirably fitted to be the civil head, for he could appreciate and use professional knowledge. The Fleets were the best judges of administrative competence, and the Fleets were content with the present *régime*. Journalistic cries, heroic remedies, sensational

personalities, were repugnant to the minds of the most expert service in the world.

In the first month of 1916 speculation was rife, both among sailors and civilians, as to German naval plans. It was known that Germany had been busy at new construction, but it was not clear what form it would take. There were rumours of capital ships armed with 17-inch guns, of new mammoth submarines capable of voyaging a thousand miles from their bases without seeking supplies, and so beaked and armoured that they could sheer through any nets. It was believed that Germany contemplated in the near future an attack by sea and air as a complement to some great offensive by land. The most reasonable forecast seemed to be that she would lay a minefield from some point on the British coast eastwards, and under its cover attempt a raid or a bombardment of our south-eastern shores. If our battleships and battle-cruisers hastened to cut off the raiders, they would be entangled in the minefield and lose heavily. In this way she hoped to reduce our capital ships and prepare for future operations by her High Sea Fleet on more equal terms.

Colour was given to some such forecast by the very remarkable German mine-laying activity at the end of 1915 and during the first months of 1916. A new type of U boat had been specially devised for the laying of mines under water. It carried the mines in a special air-tight chamber which could be shut off from the hull of the sub-

marine, and opened from above to the sea. As the mines descended they were automatically released from their sinker, which went to the bottom and acted as anchor. The mines, being lighter than water, floated at the end of the connecting chain, which kept them at the requisite distance below the surface. A minefield laid in this way was impossible to trace, except by its consequences, and it necessitated sweeping operations on a far greater scale than hitherto. Hence there tended to be a shortage of smaller auxiliaries, mine-sweepers, and the like, attached to the Grand Fleet. The campaign in the Eastern Mediterranean, where our lines of communication lay on the sea, required a very large number of small vessels, and the dearth of skilled labour at home made it difficult to construct new ones in the time. Undoubtedly Germany appreciated the situation, and laid her plans accordingly.

A second evidence of German naval activity was the dispatch of commerce-raiders from her North Sea ports. In December, 1915, a vessel of some 4,500 tons, which had been launched as a fruit-ship and christened the *Pönga*, but had been transformed into an auxiliary cruiser carrying 6-inch guns, slipped out of Kiel harbour. She was re-baptized the *Moewe*, after a gunboat sunk at Dar-es-Salaam. Her commander was the Burggrave Count von und zu Dohna-Schlodien, who had been the navigating officer on the battleship *Posen*. Disguised with false sides to look like a tramp, and flying the Swedish flag, she slipped through our watching cruisers in the fog, and,



fetching a wide circuit round the north of Scotland, arrived in the Atlantic. There she began a remarkable predatory career. She took the *Corbridge* off Cape Finisterre on 11th January, and presently added the *Author*, *Trader*, *Ariadne*, *Dromonby*, *Farringford*, and *Clan Mactavish*. The last vessel, which carried a 3-inch gun, put up a gallant fight, and lost eleven men killed. On 15th January the *Appam*, a vessel of nearly 8,000 tons, with the Governor of Sierra Leone on board, was taken in the seas off Madeira. Count Dohna, who behaved with humanity, put the crews and passengers of his different captures into the *Appam*, and sent her off under Lieutenant Berg to Norfolk, Virginia, where she duly arrived on 1st February, and raised a new legal conundrum for the American Government. Meantime the *Moewe* proceeded on her course, haunting the junction of the South American and West Indian trade routes, and added to her bag the *Westburn*, *Horace*, *Flamenco*, *Edinburgh*, and *Saxon Prince*, as well as the French *Maroni* and the Belgian *Luxembourg*. She sent the crews of these vessels in the *Westburn* to Santa Cruz, in Teneriffe, and after landing them blew the ship up. The *Moewe*, having done enough *pour chauffer la gloire*, turned towards home by the same route as she had come, and safely arrived at Kiel, on 4th March. Her commander deserved all credit for a bold and skilful performance. He had captured fifteen vessels, and cost Britain at least £2,000,000. He brought home with him four British officers, twenty-nine marines and sailors, 166 men from

the different crews, and some £50,000 in gold bars. He had proved that the right kind of disguise might give a ship the invisibility of the submarine, and his countrymen were entitled to acclaim his achievement.

Encouraged by his success, and before he had returned, Germany sent out another raider. This was the *Greif*, a big armed merchantman, carrying 7-inch and 4-inch guns, and fitted with torpedo tubes. Disguised as a tramp, and with the Norwegian colours painted on her sides, she made her way through the North Sea, and was steering a course for the Atlantic between the Shetlands and the Faroes, when, on the forenoon of 29th February she was sighted by the *Alcantara*, a Royal Mail ship of over 15,000 tons, now used as an auxiliary cruiser. The *Alcantara* overhauled her, inquired her name and destination, and lowered a boat. Suddenly the false bulwarks dropped, and the stranger opened fire at a range of about 1,000 yards. She discharged a torpedo, but without success; and then one of her shells wrecked the *Alcantara's* steering gear; and a second torpedo found its mark. Meanwhile another British auxiliary, the *Andes*, appeared, and by her gun-fire put the *Greif* out of action. A light cruiser, the *Comus*, also joined in from a long range, and made accurate shooting. The enemy, now blazing from stem to stern, presently blew up, probably when the fire reached her cargo of mines. From the sinking *Alcantara* the two cruisers rescued all but five officers and twenty-nine men, and picked up five of the *Greif's* officers and 115 of her crew.

- The position at sea in midsummer 1916 had not in substance changed from that of the preceding year. The waterways of the world were still denied by the Allies to the enemy, and used by them for their own military purposes. There had been several bursts of submarine violence, already chronicled in these pages, but it is fair to say that the submarine as a serious weapon had during the year decreased in importance. Its brutality was enhanced, but its efficiency had declined. Its moral effect in the way of shaking the nerves of British merchant seamen was *nil*. The result of the year's experience had been to induce a high degree of popular confidence in the measures taken to meet the under-water danger—a confidence not wholly justified, and, as we shall see, soon to be rudely shaken. One great incident had broken the monotony of our maritime vigil. The German High Sea Fleet had been brought to action, and in the battle of 31st May off the Jutland coast had been conclusively beaten and driven back to harbour. But that great sea-fight did not change the situation; it only confirmed it. “Before Jutland, as after it,” in Mr. Balfour's words, “the German Fleet was imprisoned; the battle was an attempt to break the bars and burst the confining gates; it failed, and with its failure the High Sea Fleet sank again into impotence.”
- The British navy, viewing the position while they swept the North Sea and the bells rang in Berlin and Hamburg to celebrate von Scheer's return, were convinced that they would see the enemy again. They had reason for their view.

The Battle of Jutland was fought because politics demanded that the German fleet should do something to justify its existence in the eyes of the German people. That demand must be repeated. As the skies darkened over Germany it was certain that von Scheer would make further efforts, and the nearer came the day of final defeat the more desperate those efforts would be. For the navy of a Power is like a politician who changes sides : it counts two on a division. If the Power is conquered, its fleet will be the spoil of the conqueror. Far better that the German battleships should go to the bottom, with a number of British ships to keep them company, than that they should be doled out ignobly to increase the strength of the Allied victors.

The work of our Fleet was so quiet and so little advertised that the ordinary Briton dwelling in the southern towns felt more remote from it than from the Flanders trenches. Only on the seaboard, especially in the north and east, was there evidence for the eye of an immense and ceaseless activity. As our army had grown so had our navy. Men of every class and occupation—yacht owners, fishermen, leisured people with a turn for the sea—had been drawn into the net, and the Royal Navy now included as motley a collection of volunteers in its auxiliary branches as could be found in the ranks of the new battalions. How arduous and anxious was the work only those employed in it could tell. That it was carried on in all weathers and, under all dis-

couragements with no surcease of keenness, was a tribute not only to our national character, but to the masterful traditions of the great Service. Any army, compelled to twenty months of comparative inaction and an unsleeping defensive, would have gone to pieces. But any army was a ragged and amateur business as compared with the British fleet. The ordeal was sustained partly because a ship's life in war is not so different from a ship's life in peace, partly because of the tradition of discipline and wise ceremonial, and partly because of the expertness of the profession. A modern sailor has duties so intricate and technical that they provide his mind with constant occupation. Even in peace neither body nor brain can afford to rust.

The sea has formed the English character, and the essential England is to be found in those who follow it. They have never altered since the days of the Channel skippers who taught Drake his trade, and the adventurers who first drank bilge and ate penguins in far-away oceans. Our seamen have been unmoved by the political storms which raged on land. They have been neither Puritans nor Cavaliers, Whigs nor Tories, but plain Englishmen, concerned with greater things. From blue water they have learned mercifulness and a certain spacious tolerance for what does not affect their craft, but they have also learned in the grimmest of schools precision and resolution. The sea endures no makeshifts. If a thing is not exactly right it will be vastly wrong. Discipline, courage to the point of madness, contempt for all that is

pretentious and insincere, are the teaching of the ocean and the elements, and they have been the qualities in all ages of the British sailor.

On the navy, "under the good Providence of God," it is written in the Articles of War, hang the peace and prosperity of our islands and our Empire. But in this struggle there were still greater issues, for on the British navy especially depended whether law or rapine was henceforth to rule the world. To one who visited the Grand Fleet there came a sense of pride which was more than the traditional devotion of Englishmen to the senior service and the remembrance of a famous past. The great battleships far up in the northern waters, wreathed in mists and beaten upon by snowstorms, the men who for twenty-four months of nerve-racking strain had kept unimpaired their edge and ardour of mind, were indeed a shining proof of the might and spirit of their land. But in the task before them there was a high duty, which their forefathers, indeed, had shared, but which lay upon them with a solemn urgency. They were the modern crusaders, the true defenders of the faith, doing battle not only for home and race and fatherland, but for the citadel of Christendom.

## CHAPTER XIV

## THE UNRESTRICTED SUBMARINE CAMPAIGN

TOWARDS the end of the year 1916 the German submarines began to achieve a success that was as unexpected as it was disturbing. The submarine had developed during the two years of war, to an extent that would probably have been reached only in twenty years of peace. In size, speed, carrying capacity and power as an offensive unit the submarine had become a factor of the greatest significance. A submarine could cross and recross the Atlantic with ease, could travel faster on the surface than at least half of the merchant shipping of the world, could carry a sufficient number of torpedoes and shells to provide a three weeks' spasmodic offensive, and with the help of its guns could remain on the surface using its surface speed against all but armed ships.

The gunning of the submarine was a considerable factor in the submarine war. If forced to rely upon torpedoes alone, a submarine's range of action was restricted. Torpedoes are large and bulky. No submarine could carry an unlimited number. And even if a sufficient number could be carried for a long voyage, a submarine would require to approach closely to a vessel to torpedo it, and the chances of success would be minimised

if the vessel should choose to sail on a zigzag course. In actual practice a submarine commander rarely attempted to torpedo a ship which adopted such tactics. The vast majority of merchant ships could travel faster than a submarine when compelled to sail submerged, and even a small gun mounted on a vessel was sufficient to force the submarine to submerge and rely upon its torpedoes.

But when the submarines began to mount guns of 4- and 6-inch calibre, the problem of evasion became complicated. About 75 per cent. of armed vessels escaped when attacked by submarine; but the others were doomed in a conflict with a submarine armed with guns. The immunity of merchantmen armed with guns was immediately appreciated. Despite the extraordinary improvements in the construction of submarines, almost any gun duel was too hazardous to risk. One shell might go home and the submarine would be lost. Unless it completely outranged the guns of its opponent, no submarine would open a gun duel, and in such a position its only tactics were to submerge and trust to stalking in order to get home a torpedo.

The arming of merchantmen was not the simple thing it might have seemed. The status of armed ships aroused considerable controversy. The right of every vessel to resist search or capture could be admitted without thereby granting its right to mount guns. And even when the provision of guns was admitted as an ancient right, neutral nations tended to look askance on guns of high



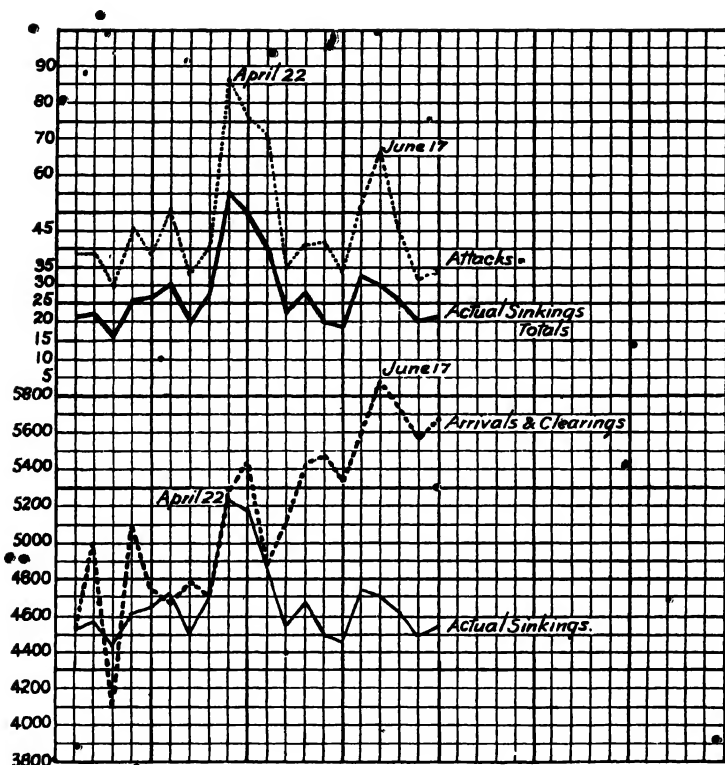
calibre, and any guns mounted on the fore part of the vessel. The presumption underlying this point of view was that a ship might use guns *offensively* when mounted on its fore part. The Americans took this standpoint, and at first they only admitted the non-belligerency of vessels with guns lower than 6-inch calibre. European neutrals were more difficult to convince as to the right to carry guns ; but when the Germans declared their unrestricted submarine campaign in February, 1917, the Americans at once saw the difficulty of the reply to the campaign, armed their merchantmen, and began to discuss the justification of the attitude of offence. It was realised that in dealing with an enemy who struck stealthily and without warning against non-combatants, the only safe defence was immediate attack of any enemy submarine, at sight. Yet a Dutch port could not be entered by an armed merchantman until she had unshipped her guns.

The adoption of the unrestricted campaign was, of course, a confession of weakness. At some part of the battle of the Somme, presumably, the enemy began to realise the exact significance of the new British Army. The Germans are adepts at the application of a principle and they were able to see in the strategy and tactics of the battle of the Somme, the possibilities of what they most dreaded—a military decision. To remove all chance of such an eventuality, they saw that they must find a means to limit Britain's contribution to the war on land ; and the submarine, developed to a great size, armed with two or more guns of

heavy calibre, and carrying a number of torpedoes, seemed the best weapon.

It is impossible to think the unrestricted campaign was launched without some such antecedents, for clearly, when it was announced, the submarines were ready to begin their work and the Germans had reason to believe they would be able to repair the wastage. All this would require careful preparation and organisation.

The unrestricted submarine campaign began upon 1st February, 1917. The Germans announced that "all sea traffic" within defined areas ("barred zones") would be "prevented by all weapons." The "barred zones" surrounded the British Isles, covered the bulk of France, Italy, and the whole Mediterranean, with the exception of a zone about Spain, Morocco, and part of the south coast of France, and a shipping lane to Greece. No vessel could possibly approach the British Isles without passing through the zone. The British Isles were completely isolated with the whole of the western coasts of France. It was presumably in anticipation of this extension of the campaign that the British Admiralty had extended the mined zone in the North Sea towards the end of January, and it is probable that an effective use of mines would have limited if it had not prevented the freedom of the German submarines. The North Sea is a comparatively shallow basin in which mines could be used with assured success. But a thorough mining of the German coast line could not be maintained without a successful fleet action, and the moment for



Graph of the unrestricted Submarine campaign between Feb.'1 and July. The numbers at the left hand side represent vessels. The upper part of the graph shows the attacks and sinkings week by week; and, in the lower part, the curve of the sinkings (though, of course, on a vastly different scale) has been superimposed upon that of the vessels arrived and cleared. The general tendency of the campaign is thus obvious.

such a challenge had to be carefully chosen in order that all the advantages should not be upon the German side.

The German "blockade," according to existing law, was illegal since it could not be completely effective. Its interference with neutral traffic was such that no neutral having the power could be expected to regard it as other than an unfriendly act. Its inhumanity was an evident affront to the historic prescriptions of civilised warfare. But the difficulties it provided for the Allies were real and formidable, and the British Admiralty set itself to deal with the campaign with no confidence that they could do more than limit its ravages.

For the present we have no complete figures for the casualties beyond the first eighteen days of the campaign. The figures published in Germany were obviously untrustworthy. How could a submarine tell what vessel she had sunk when on at least one occasion out of two she had to remain submerged for fear of the patrol boats? At best a guess that would not err on the modest side would be given.

But the campaign was launched with the most inflated hopes. The Germans were to sink a million tons a month, and cause the Allies in two or three months to accept peace terms favourable to Germany. The campaign was a blow at the British, and by implication the Allies' communications. It had to cut or gravely hamper them if it was to achieve success and justify expectations. And yet, from the first, there was little

chance of either achievement. The British Admiralty with the other Allies set itself to grapple with the problem both by making good the wastage and by reducing the number of submarines.

The Admiralty adopted the practice of announcing only the British casualties in three categories: 1. Ships over 1,600 tons; 2. Ships under 1,600 tons; and 3. Fishing craft; and the number of British vessels unsuccessfully attacked was also given. To give some measure of the risk, the number of vessels of all nations arriving at and cleared from British ports during the same week was also stated. The method was not ideal, but when the series had run for some time, the numbers involved were so great that a fair account of the achievement and possibilities of the campaign could be gained.

•• In the figure M. the actual sinkings and the arrivals and clearances have been plotted, and the graph is not difficult to interpret. It is clear that whatever the total sinkings and however critical the loss might be to the Allies, the German submarines were not able to cope with the vessels which entered and left the critical areas. The number of vessels exposed to risk shows a steady rise, whereas the actual sinkings of British vessels came to a maximum in the third week of April, and then began to fall. The casualties inflicted in the third week of April were the result of a spurt, and although the graph shows a mean of some 25 vessels per week this cannot be taken

as showing the steady success of the submarine campaign because the number of vessels exposed to risk was constantly rising.

The unrestricted submarine campaign was, therefore, not the success it was meant to be. Its achievement was sufficient to necessitate some economies in food in Britain; but by this time almost the whole world was subject to some restrictions of the sort. A more accurate indication of the degree of success attained by the campaign is given in the speech of Sir Edward Carson. The total tonnage of vessels of all nations lost during the first 18 days of February amounted to 304,596 which would mean about 500,000 tons per month. As the British tonnage at that time amounted to over 16,000,000 tons, it can be appreciated that the campaign at best did not touch the *being* of the Allies' offensive, but merely its well-being.

But one of the effects of the campaign was the pronounced hostility of most neutrals. The United States, Cuba, Panama, China, Brazil, Bolivia, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Liberia, Hayti, and San Domingo, all severed diplomatic negotiations with Germany, and the first three announced their complete adhesion to the Cause of the Allies. The final implications of this extension of the war only gradually came home to the world. It was loudly proclaimed in Germany that the campaign would be decided before America was able to give any military assistance to the Allies. But as the months dragged on, and the submarines failed to bring about a decision,

it became evident to German thinkers that the anti-German world possessed other powers. It could ruin Germany by withholding raw material or refusing credit or selling on the low exchange value of the mark.

The task of coping with the submarine campaign fell chiefly upon the British navy, though an American flotilla under the command of the distinguished officer, Rear-Admiral Sims, co-operated after April, 1917. Administrative changes were designed to free Sir John Jellicoe and his assistants from routine work in order that they might give themselves more wholly to the naval problem of the war and an Anti-Submarine department was created.

The success of the British navy in dealing with the submarine has already been pointed out. The means by which it was achieved were not different in kind from those which had successfully checked the earlier campaign. A multitude of patrol boats, submarine microphones, and, in territorial waters, slow moving escorting seaplanes prevented the enemy achieving his end, pending the solution of the physical problem of providing vessels with eyes capable of seeing through the medium of sea water. This problem is simple in its elements, though extremely difficult of solution. It was not solved in the period under review, and the submarine had to be attacked by other methods.

## CHAPTER XV

## RAIDS AND RETRIBUTION

THE Battle of Jutland in May, 1916, was so discouraging to the German Admiralty, that, despite all official boasting, the naval staff came to the conclusion that a decisive battle offered no chances sufficient to justify them in entering upon it. The staff therefore resolved to concentrate upon the *guerre de course* which at least must inflict almost intolerable strain upon the British and give the enemy the maximum advantages.

This sequence of events is not wholly a matter of conjecture. The German High Seas Fleet entered the North Sea in the third week in August, 1916; but returned to its harbours after a brief breath of sea air. The Fleet was presumably in strength, and was preceded by Zeppelins. It was the latter which, discovering the Grand Fleet ready for the enemy, prevailed upon the German fleets to return ignominiously. The light cruisers *Nottingham* and *Falmouth* were lost to submarines in pursuing the enemy; but one submarine was sunk and another was rammed. Yet the main facts of this obscure episode are that the German Fleet came out, and, on seeing the enemy it was presumed to be seeking, returned at once. The German High Seas Fleet refused battle. It is



stimulating to hear of the presence of the Grand Fleet exactly where and when it was wanted ; but we know no more of the dispositions nor of the reasons for their adoption.

On the other hand, there were numerous raids of the lighter craft in the straits and thereabouts. A skirmish took place early in June, and on the 23rd the Harwich-Rotterdam steamship *Brussels*, with the heroic Captain Fryatt in command, was captured by German destroyers, and taken into Zeebrugge. On 22nd July there were two other skirmishes between the opposing destroyers. The first took place off the North Hinder lightship, where three German destroyers were sighted, but steamed off before they could be effectively engaged. The second encounter resulted in six German destroyers receiving a hard pounding off the Schouwer Bank. But they were able to escape to the Belgian coast. The Germans claimed that they had reconnoitred the Thames estuary without encountering British forces ; but that they inflicted heavy damage upon some light cruisers and destroyers which met them as they were returning.

A more significant sortie was made on 25th October. During the darkness of a very dark night a flotilla of German destroyers made a raid upon the British Cross-Channel transport service. The enemy claimed that the raiders passed through the straits of Dover to between Boulogne and Folkestone, and that they sank eleven patrol steamers and two or three destroyers. It was the first raid of the sort against the all-important

cross-Channel communications, and the success, small as it was, stimulated some criticism of the Admiralty owing to the very rarity of the occurrence. What actually happened has never been disclosed, and indeed, in an engagement of the sort that is all over almost before it has begun in the darkness of the night, it is probable that neither side has more than an outline of the episode. The transport *Queen* was sunk, though she was, fortunately, empty. Six drifters were lost. One destroyer, the *Flirt*, was sunk, and another, the *Nubian*, had to be towed into port. The honours of the engagement, such as they were, went to the Germans.

Another engagement took place on the night of 22nd January, 1917. The Zeebrugge flotilla, comprising some ten or twelve modern destroyers, seems to have been attempting to rejoin the High Seas Fleet when it was caught by light British forces off the Dutch coast; a brisk fight took place during which a large German destroyer was sunk. In a second encounter during the same night between British and German destroyers, one of the British vessels was torpedoed off Schouwen Bank, and was sunk later, after the crew had been removed, as a matter of convenience. The German reports 'admitted' only what could not be suppressed, and this included the appearance of V69, a large new destroyer, the flagship of the German flotilla, in the harbour of Ymuiden. It put into the Dutch port badly damaged. Masts, funnels, and steering gear had been shot away, and it had been rammed. It

bore the dead body of the commander, Captain Schultz, and its plight was sufficient testimony to the treatment it had met with from the British ships.

On 25th January a small German warship approached the Suffolk coast and fired some star shells, and then a number of live shells. Only a few reached the land, and they caused little damage and no casualties. In this and the other encounters, the Germans seemed to have enjoyed a large measure of immunity. It is clear that no conceivable naval dispositions and the greatest skill and alertness could not secure the British coast against occasional raids. Sooner or later the chances were that the raiders would be caught and it is to be remarked that none of the raids raised a vital issue. The successes they achieved were not such as to have any direct influence upon the war. Apart from the attacks upon undefended coast towns they constituted legitimate and not unenterprising tactics to nurse the *morale* of the Germans and caused a certain nervousness among the inhabitants of East Coast towns.

One of the raids met with severe punishment. On the night of 20th April, six German destroyers approached Dover, and fired a number of rounds into a ploughed field a few miles therefrom. The enemy then steered towards the British shipping in the neighbourhood, and appears to have captured a few sailors from the barge *Iverna*. But shortly afterwards the flotilla was met by the two British destroyer leaders *Swift* and *Broke*, of the Dover patrol. The former was in command

of Commander Ambrose M. Peek, and the latter of Commander E. R. G. R. Evans, the companion of Captain Scott.

The whole of the ensuing engagement occupied a few minutes. At one moment the German destroyers were steaming, flushed with their ignoble success against the ploughed fields of Dover, in the darkness of the night towards some British shipping ; at the next they were flying for life towards their base. Their confusion was so great that they appear to have gathered no connected idea of what happened. The German reports suggest that the enemy destroyers did not even discover how many British vessels were engaged.

The *Swift* and *Broke* were steaming towards home at 12.40 a.m., when they sighted the German flotilla going eastwards at high speed. The opposed vessels had run into each other in the intense darkness, for they were but 600 yards apart when they first saw each other. The Germans at once opened fire. The *Swift* replied, and steamed straight at the leading destroyer in order to ram it. She missed, but turned, torpedoing another German destroyer in the midst of the evolution, and steamed towards the German leader once more. But the latter made full speed towards safety.

The *Broke*, as the *Swift* first turned to ram the German leader, got home a torpedo on the second, and then steamed full speed against the third. The blow went home, and the two vessels locked together fought the sort of battle which

seemed to have disappeared with modern conditions. Every gun, rifle, and pistol was turned upon the enemy, who, maddened and terrified, attempted to escape from their vessel by clambering on to the *Broke*. The two rear German destroyers turned their guns on the British vessel and reduced the forecastle guns' crews from 18 to 6; but the guns were kept in action under Midshipman Donald A. Gyles, R.N.R.

The Germans who had boarded the *Broke* rushed forward, and the midshipman, though wounded in the eye, and almost blinded by blood, met them with an automatic pistol. A German attempted to seize the revolver, but was bayoneted by Able Seaman Ingleson. The others were then driven over the side of the vessel except two, who were taken prisoners. The whole of this skirmish occupied but a moment, for the *Broke* got free of the rammed vessel in two minutes, and attempted unsuccessfully to ram another. She then engaged the last two destroyers, but received a shell in the boiler-room which put her out of control. While still able to move, she steered towards a destroyer which was heavily on fire. The crew cried aloud: "Save! Save!" but almost immediately afterwards resumed their firing. The *Broke* replied with her guns, and fired a torpedo.

The *Swift* had meanwhile abandoned her chase of the leading German destroyer, and turning, came upon the vessel which had been rammed. She witnessed its disappearance stern first, and lowered boats to rescue the survivors. There

were rescued 10 officers and 108 men. Two German destroyers were sunk, and possibly a third; but the British vessels suffered no material damage, and the casualties were exceedingly light.

In the interesting supplementary statement issued by the Admiralty are recounted two anecdotes which show the fine spirit of the wounded. The *Broke's* helmsman, Able Seaman William G. Rowles, though hit by shell fragments four times, remained at the wheel throughout the action, and the captain only discovered that he was wounded when he said: "I'm going off now, sir," and fainted. A number of the wounded only reported themselves on the following day with various ingenious excuses for the delay. A stoker with a piece of shrapnel in his head explained to the surgeon: "I was too busy, sir, along of clearing up that rubbish on the stoker's mess-deck." Spirit such as this is a better insurance of victory than almost any numbers; and it is remarkable that the British were outnumbered by three to one, and yet sank two enemy vessels.

The whole episode is instructive. It illustrates the inevitable chapter in every series of German raids. The enemy could not be prevented attacking British ports; but he did so under the risk of encountering the British patrols. Retribution must follow. He could only succeed when his force was of unchallengeable superiority. But when he came into touch with British war vessels, he was out-manœuvred and out-fought.

## CHAPTER XVI

## THE NAVY AND THE WAR

THE secrecy in which the normal routine of the navy was shrouded led many to misunderstand its paramount rôle. In actual fact the essential condition which underlay the possibility of an Allied victory was the supremacy of the British navy. Even if the Allies had been self-supporting as regards food and *matériel*, they were still operating on exterior lines, and their *liaison* was the sea. But they depended upon the sea intercourse not only for inter-communication, but also for *matériel* almost wholly at first, and for food to the end. The war problem of the Allies would have been inconceivable without this fundamental assumption of sea power. It would never have arisen for the conclusion would have been swift and inevitable.

But let it be granted that the supremacy of the British navy was thus necessary to ensure the supply and co-operation of the Allies, and it is still not realised how intimate was the bearing of this fact upon the reduction of the enemy. The actual starvation of any country—even of Great Britain—is probably impossible to achieve by a blockade in these days. Labour would be turned increasingly to cultivation, and the lack of imports would be compensated for by an augmented

self-sufficiency. But the withdrawal of the margin of food which stands between sufficiency and want, impairs very surely a nation's *morale*, undermines its spirit, weakens its "will towards victory." The British blockade, which was one of the functions of its supreme navy, operated in this way. Not a meal was eaten in Berlin or Cracow that was not seasoned by the effect of British naval action.

There were, however, even graver re-actions when the blockade was made complete. When the embargo was extended to all commodities the economical situation became affected. The decrease in the supply of manufactured goods laid a strain upon labour. But even additional labour could not supply the lack of raw material. The exports of Germany sank to such an extent that the mark became worth only 50 per cent. of the pre-war exchange value. If it had not been for the huge amount of coal stolen from Belgium the exchange would have fallen still more.

It is clear that so far as Germany was a closed system her economic situation though gravely unsound, could have little effect upon the war. But as the possibility of a complete victory receded from view the commercial classes began to look to the future, and they appreciated their plight with a truly Germanic thoroughness. To stave off bankruptcy they must have a good supply of raw material immediately upon the conclusion of peace. But how to secure it with the exchange at 50 per cent. of pre-war rates was the problem. The operation of Conscription, and its corollary,



the Civilian Service Law, merely accentuated the effect of the blockade. With every additional unit given over to destruction, and withdrawn from production the blockade drew its outposts nearer in to the very heart of the enemy.

We have already seen how the British blockade developed, not without friction with neutral nations, and not without certain inconsistencies arising from the manner of its growth. If there had been no neutral nations to consider, it might have been rigidly enforced from the beginning. But it was necessary to interfere as little as possible with neutral trade, though it will always be a moot point whether the embargo might not have been pushed further. Cotton was allowed to go through to the enemy for a considerable time, though this was tantamount to making him a present of so much ammunition. The blockade was not really enforceable nor enforced until the entry of the United States into the war made it possible to ration European neutrals. But by that time the enemy was in great straits for lack of food, and almost all necessities.

The submarine and mine had made the inshore (the ordinary) blockade impossible. The apparatus by which a substitute was provided sufficient to meet modern needs cannot fail to be of interest. The number of vessels impressed into the service to carry out the blockade steadily grew until it became almost impossible for any vessel of any size, however small, to pass unseen through the

cordon. Steaming at distances of 20 miles from each other, each cruiser had a clear vision overlapping that of her right and left hand neighbours. The middle ten miles of the space between them was continually searched by both. The vast majority of the blockade vessels were converted merchantmen, covering their beat at sea for nearly two months at a time before returning to port, with merchant officers in charge. Every detail of a ship's papers was known to these men, who were thus able to detect any attempt at imposture.

How the cruisers carried out their work was admirably described to the *Brooklyn Eagle* by Rear-Admiral Sir Dudley de Chair, Commanding the Tenth Blockade Squadron until 6th March, 1916.

"You must imagine us steaming a beaten track up and down a bit of open sea : in total darkness at night and during the day keeping a sharp look-out for mines and submarines of the enemy. The weather in the North Atlantic in mid-winter is very severe, and most of our ships remain at sea continuously for fifty days before proceeding to port to recoal and reprovision.

"Sometimes nothing happens for days on end. At eleven o'clock every night if our wireless is not too busy, we pick up the day's war bulletins from Poldhu, and the Eiffel Tower, or some German station.

"Finally, one day there is a blotch of smoke on the horizon. As we keep in touch with our neighbouring units by wireless, we know that this cannot be from the funnels of one of our own cruisers. Word passes that a ship is sighted perhaps attempting to elude our blockade. It is the duty of the patrolling cruiser to investigate. Overhauling the merchantman, the cruiser's gun fires two blank

charges to draw attention to the line of signal flags which have been run up to the mast-head. This is a necessary step, for often there is but one man on the bridge of the merchantman, and he might easily fail to observe us—unintentionally or otherwise.

"The cruiser's signals announce that an officer will be sent aboard to examine the ship's manifests. Accompanied by an armed guard of five men, the boarding officer goes over the cruiser's side and often at some peril to life and limb manages somehow to clamber up to the tramp's deck. I have often seen the cruiser's dory stove in, and the boarding party thrown into the water.

"Our boarding officer interviews the captain of the merchantman, who states his port of origin, his destination, his cargo, the length of his voyage, and whether or not he stands in need of any assistance. The crew is sometimes mustered in suspicious cases to determine whether any German subjects are aboard. Finally, the manifests are carefully examined.

"In many cases the neutral ship is quite innocent, and is allowed immediately to proceed; in fact, whenever there is fair doubt about the cargo, we are lenient in releasing our temporary capture. In the case of fishing trawlers, which swarm the North Sea, it is impossible to examine the cargo immediately, and where ships are partly in ballast the examination may also be done quickly.

"I cannot emphasise too strongly that it is altogether safer and more humane for the neutral to be examined in a protected harbour. There seem to be two methods of dealing with the suspected blockade runner. Our method is to take the neutral to the nearest British port for examination. The German method is to torpedo at sight. Between these two extremes there should be the alternative of an examination at sea, but it is obviously quite impossible to discharge an entire ship's cargo upon her own decks with heavy weather likely to develop at any moment.

"My experience as Commander of the North Sea blockade for twenty months is that all neutral captains invariably prefer to be sent into a British harbour. The delay is reduced

### 318 The British Navy during the War [1916

to a minimum, and the inspection is accomplished with safety and dispatch."

Yet sea power began to take on a new orientation when the large German submarines came into play. It is possible that neither the large nor the small need have been allowed to trouble the Allies if a different naval strategy had been adopted from the first. The submarines might have been mined in their bases if the strategical offensive had been more in favour at the Admiralty. But this point of view did not find expression until the submarine menace began to impose economies on the food of the Allies.

The dissatisfaction with the Admiralty was accentuated by the notorious competence and splendid fighting spirit of the navy. If things were not as they should have been it was realised ~~that~~ the navy, at any rate, was not at fault. At the beginning of November, 1916, Sir Henry Jackson, the First Sea Lord, was made Governor of Greenwich Hospital, and Sir John Jellicoe was brought to the Admiralty in his stead. The public heard the news with mixed feelings. Sir Henry Jackson was quite rightly recognised as a scientific officer. He was a Fellow of the Royal Society. But he was wrongly credited with being over theoretical.

Sir John Jellicoe was known to possess the confidence of the entire navy, and he was everywhere recognised for what he was and is—a Commander of the line of Drake and Nelson. He left the Command of the Fleet with grief. He

was succeeded by Sir David Beatty, one of the youngest British Admirals, who had shown in the battle of Jutland as much skill as daring, who had proved himself as swift in resolution as cool and deliberate in thought.

Mr. Balfour was later succeeded by Sir Edward Carson, who earned the confidence and goodwill of the navy through his determination not to interfere. He not only allowed the navy to run itself, but also saw that others did. He protected it against outside interference, and supported the naval men to the full. Under his regime, the system, which tended to submerge Sir John Jellicoe and his advisers, in administration was changed, and the officers were freed to think and plan for the future. An anti-submarine department was founded and complete attention was given to the pressing problem of the submarine. In June, 1917, Sir Edward went to the War Cabinet, and Sir Eric Geddes succeeded him.

The career of Sir Eric Geddes is one of the romances of the war. He had been a railway porter, had risen to be one of the greatest railway experts in the country, and had assisted in organising the military transport in France. It was a daring thing to appoint him First Lord and virtual controller of the Admiralty.

• All these considerations do not do more than skim the surface of a vast subject. The navy's work was a chaplet of daily heroisms. It was carried out in silence and reserve, and it was

characterised by a spirit that was absent from the rest of the war. In spite of the developments of modern science the navy is still built upon the most ancient of crafts, that of navigation, and in it is concentrated more of the English spirit than in the army or, indeed, in any other manifestation of the nation's activities. The spirit of Drake and Nelson still dwells in the fleets, and the men who live under the white ensign preserve the same daring, endurance, and humanity as the seamen who defended the British shores in the days of Elizabeth. Not yet can a tenth of their deeds be known ; but in years to come the world will learn a story of courage and faithfulness more memorable than anything in the proud record of their forerunners.

## APPENDIX I

## THE FREEDOM OF THE SEAS

*The following statement was made by Mr. Balfour in an interview with Mr. Edward Marshall, an American journalist, for publication in the United States.*

THE phrase "freedom of the seas" is naturally attractive to British and American ears. For the extension of freedom into all departments of life and over the whole world has been one of the chief aspirations of the English-speaking peoples, and efforts towards that end have formed no small part of their contribution to civilization. But "freedom" is a word of many meanings; and we shall do well to consider in what meaning the Germans use it when they ask for it, not (it may be safely said) because they love freedom, but because they hate Britain.

About the "freedom of the seas" in one sense we are all agreed. England and Holland fought for it in times gone by. To their success the United States may be said to owe its very existence. For if, three hundred years ago, the maritime claims of Spain and Portugal had been admitted, whatever else North America might have been it would not have been English-speaking. It neither would have employed the language, nor obeyed the laws nor enjoyed the institutions which, in the last analysis, are of British origin.

But the "freedom of the seas" desired by the modern German is a very different thing from the freedom for which our forefathers fought in days of old. How, indeed, can it be otherwise? The most simple-minded must feel suspicious when they find that these missionaries of maritime freedom are the very same persons who preach and who practise upon the land the extremest doctrines of military absolutism.

## THE GERMAN IDEAL

Ever since the genius of Bismarck created the German Empire by Prussian rifles, welding the German people into a great unity by military means, on a military basis, German ambitions have been a cause of unrest to the entire world. Commercial and political domination, depending upon a gigantic Army autocratically governed, has been and is the German ideal.

If, then, Germany wants what she calls the freedom of the seas, it is solely as a means whereby this ideal may receive world-wide extension. The power of Napoleon never extended beyond the coast line of Europe. Further progress was barred by the British fleets, and by them alone. Germany is determined to endure no such limitations; and if she cannot defeat her enemies at sea, at least she will paralyse their sea power.

There is a characteristic simplicity in the methods by which she sets about attaining this object. She poses as a reformer of international law, though international law has never bound her for an hour. She objects to "economic pressure" when it is exercised by a fleet, though she sets no limit to the brutal completeness with which economic pressure may be imposed by an army. She sighs over the suffering which war imposes upon peaceful commerce, though her own methods of dealing with peaceful commerce would have wrung the conscience of Captain Kidd. She denounces the maritime methods of the Allies, though in her efforts to defeat them she is deterred neither by the rules of war, the appeal of humanity, nor the rights of neutrals.

It must be admitted, therefore, that it is not the cause of peace, of progress, or of liberty which preoccupies her when in the name of freedom she urges fundamental changes in maritime practice. Her manifest object is to shatter an obstacle which now stands in her way, as more than a hundred years ago it stood in the way of the masterful genius who was her oppressor and is her model. Not along this path are peace and liberty to be obtained. To paralyse naval power and leave military power uncontrolled is surely the worst injury which international law can inflict upon mankind.

## NOT A RELIEF FROM ARMAMENTS

Let me confirm this truth by dwelling for a moment on an aspect of it which is, I think, too often forgotten. It



should be observed that even if the German proposal were carried out in its entirety it would do nothing to relieve the world from the burden of armaments.

Fleets would still be indispensable. But their relative value would suffer change. They could no longer be used to exercise pressure upon an enemy except in conjunction with an army. The gainers by the change would, therefore, be the nations who possessed armies—the military monarchies. Interference with trade would be stopped, but oversea invasion would be permitted. The proposed change would therefore not merely diminish the importance of sea power, but it would diminish it most in the case of non-military States, like America and Britain.

Suppose, for example, that Germany, in her desire to appropriate some Germanised portions of South America, came into conflict with the United States over the Monroe Doctrine. The United States, bound by the doctrine of "freedom of the seas," could aim no blow at her enemy until she herself had created a large army and become for the time being a military community. Her sea power would be useless, or nearly so. Her land power would not exist.

But more than this might happen. Let us suppose the desired change had been effected. Let us suppose that the maritime nations, accepting the new situation, thought themselves relieved from all necessity of protecting their seaborne commerce, and arranged their programmes of naval ship-building accordingly. For some time it would probably proceed on legal lines. Commerce, even hostile commerce, would be unhampered. But a change might happen. Some unforeseen circumstances might make the German General Staff think it to be to the interest of its nation to cast to the winds the "freedom of the seas," and in defiance of the new law to destroy the trade of its enemies.

Could anybody suggest, after our experience in this war, after reading German histories and German theories of politics, that Germany would be prevented from taking such a step by the mere fact that it was a breach of international treaties to which she was a party? She would never hesitate—and the only result of the cession by the pacific Powers of their maritime rights would be that the military Powers would seize the weapon for their own purpose and turn it against those who had too hastily abandoned it.

## INTERNATIONAL LAW AND AUTHORITY

Thus we are forced to the sorrowful recognition of the weakness of international law so long as it is unsupported by international authority.

While this state of things is permitted to endure, drastic changes in international law may well do more harm than good; for if the new rules should involve serious limitations of belligerent Powers, they would be broken as soon as it suited the interests of the aggressor; and his victim would be helpless. Nothing could be more disastrous. It is bad that law should be defied. It is far worse that it should injure the well-disposed. Yet this is what would inevitably happen, since law unsupported by authority will hamper everybody but the criminal.

Here we come face to face with the great problem which lies behind all the changing aspects of this tremendous war. When it is brought to an end, how is civilized mankind to reorganize itself that similar catastrophes shall not be permitted to recur?

## AMERICAN AND BRITISH CO-OPERATION

The problem is insistent, though its full solution may be beyond our powers at this stage of our development. But surely, even now, it is fairly clear that if substantial progress is to be made toward securing the peace of the world, and a free development of its constituent nations, the United States of America and the British Empire should explicitly recognize, what all instinctively know, that on these great subjects they share a common ideal.

I am well aware that in even hinting at the possibility of co-operation between these two countries I am treading on delicate ground. The fact that American independence was wrested by force from Great Britain colours the whole view which some Americans take of the "natural" relations between the two communities. Others are impatient of anything which they regard as a sentimental appeal to community of race; holding that in respect of important sections of the American people this community of race does not, in fact, exist. Others, again, think that any argument based on a similarity of laws and institutions belittles the greatness of America's contribution to the political development of the modern world.

Rightly understood, however, what I have to say is quite

independent of individual views on any of these subjects. It is based on the unquestioned fact that the growth of British laws, British forms of government, British literature and modes of thought was the slow work of centuries; that among the co-heirs of these age-long labours were the great men who founded the United States; and that the two branches of the English-speaking peoples, after the political separation, developed along parallel lines. So it has come about that whether they be friendly or quarrelsome, whether they rejoice in their agreements or cultivate their differences, they can no more get rid of a certain fundamental similarity of outlook than children born of the same parents and brought up in the same home. Whether, therefore, you study political thought in Great Britain or America, in Canada or in Australia, you will find it presents the sharpest and most irreconcilable contrast to political thought in the Prussian Kingdom, or in that German Empire into which, with no modification of aims or spirit, the Prussian Kingdom has developed. Holding, as I do, that this war is essentially a struggle between these two ideals of ancient growth, I cannot doubt that in the result of that struggle America is no less concerned than the British Empire.

Now, if this statement, which represents the most unchanging elements in my political creed, has in it any element of truth, how does it bear upon the narrower issues upon which I dwelt in the earlier portions of this interview? In other words, what are the practical conclusions to be drawn from it?

#### "BEHIND LAW THERE MUST BE POWER"

My own conclusions are these: If in our time any substantial effort is to be made toward ensuring the permanent triumph of the Anglo-Saxon ideal, the great communities which accept it must work together. And in working together they must bear in mind that law is not enough. Behind law there must be power. It is good that arbitration should be encouraged. It is good that the accepted practices of warfare should become ever more humane. It is good that before peace is broken the would-be belligerents should be compelled to discuss their differences in some congress of the nations. It is good that the security of the smaller States should be fenced round with peculiar care. But all the precautions are mere scraps of paper unless they can be enforced. We delude ourselves if we think we are

doing good service merely by passing good resolutions. What is needed now, and will be needed so long as militarism is unconquered, is the machinery for enforcing them; and the contrivance of such a machinery will tax to its utmost the statesmanship of the world.

I have no contribution to make to the solution of the problem. Yet this much seems clear. If there is to be any effective sanction behind the desire of the English-speaking peoples to preserve the world's peace and the free development of the nations, that sanction must consist largely in the potential use of sea-power. For two generations and more after the last great war Britain was without a rival on the sea. During this period Belgium became a State, Greece secured her independence, the unity of Italy was achieved, the South American republics were established, the Monroe Doctrine came into being.

To me it seems that the lesson to be drawn from history by those who love peace, freedom, and security is not that Britain and America should be deprived, or should deprive themselves, of the maritime powers they now possess, but that, if possible, those powers should be organized in the interests of an ideal common to the two States, an ideal upon whose progressive realization the happiness and peace of the world must largely depend.

## APPENDIX II

## THE POLICY OF THE "BLACK LIST" .

[On July 28th, 1916, the American Ambassador in London presented, on behalf of his Government, a formal protest against the policy of the "Black List," to which Lord Grey of Fallodon replied on October 10th. The nature of the American arguments will appear from the British rejoinder.]

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—His Majesty's Government have had under consideration the note which your Excellency was good enough to communicate to me on July 28th last with respect to the addition of certain firms in the United States of America to the statutory list compiled and issued in accordance with the "Trading with the Enemy (Extension of Powers) Act, 1915."

You will recall that shortly after this Act became law I had the honour, in my note of February 16th last in reply to your note of January 26th, to explain the object of the Act. It is a piece of purely municipal legislation, and provides that His Majesty may by proclamation prohibit persons in the United Kingdom from trading with any persons in foreign countries who might be specified in such proclamations or in any subsequent orders. It also imposes appropriate penalties upon persons in the United Kingdom who violate the provisions of this statute.

That is all. His Majesty's Government neither purport nor claim to impose any disabilities or penalties upon neutral individuals or upon neutral commerce. The measure is simply one which enjoins those who owe allegiance to Great Britain to cease having trade relations with persons who are found to be assisting or rendering service to the enemy.

I can scarcely believe that the United States Government intend to challenge the right of Great Britain as a sovereign State to pass legislation prohibiting all those who owe her allegiance from trading with any specified persons when such prohibition is found necessary in the public interest.

## 328 The British Navy during the War [1916

The right to do so is so obvious that I feel sure that the protest which your Excellency handed to me has been founded on a misconception of the scope and intent of the measures which have been taken.

### NEUTRAL AND BELLIGERENT RIGHTS

This view is strengthened by some of the remarks which are made in the note. It is, for instance, stated that these measures are "inevitably and essentially inconsistent with the rights of the citizens of all nations not involved in war." The note then proceeds to point out that citizens of the United States are entirely within their rights in attempting to trade with any of the nations now at war. His Majesty's Government readily admit that the citizens of every neutral nation are free to trade with belligerent countries. The United States Government will no doubt equally readily admit that they do so subject to the right of the other belligerent to put an end to that trade by every means within his power which is recognized by international law, by such measures, for instance, as the seizure of neutral goods as contraband, or for breach of blockade, etc. The legislation, however, to which exception is taken does not belong to that class of measures. It is purely municipal. It is an exercise of the sovereign right of an independent State over its own citizens, and nothing more. This fact has not, I feel sure, been fully realised by the Government of the United States of America, for the note maintains that the Government cannot consent to see these remedies and penalties altered and extended at will in derogation of the right of its citizens; and says that "conspicuous among the principles which the civilized nations of the world have accepted for the safeguarding of the rights of neutrals is the just and honourable principle that neutrals may not be condemned nor their goods confiscated, except upon fair adjudication and after an opportunity to be heard in Prize Courts or elsewhere."

As I have said above, the legislation merely prohibits persons in the United Kingdom from trading with certain specified individuals, who, by reason of their nationality or their association, are found to support the cause of the enemy, and trading with whom will therefore strengthen that cause. So far as that legislation is concerned, no rights or property of these specified individuals are interfered with; neither they nor their property are condemned or confiscated; they are as free as they were before to carry on their business.

The only disability they suffer is that British subjects are prohibited from giving to them the support and assistance of British credit and British property.

The steps which His Majesty's Government are taking under the above-mentioned Act are not confined to the United States of America; the policy is being pursued in all neutral countries. Nay, more. With the full consent of the Allied Governments, firms, even in Allied countries, are being placed on the statutory list if they are firms with whom it is necessary to prevent British subjects from trading. These considerations may, perhaps, serve to convince the Government of the United States that the measures now being taken are not directed against neutral trade in general. Still less are they directed against American trade in particular; they are part of the general belligerent operations designed to weaken the enemy's resources.

#### AMERICAN FEARS UNFOUNDED

I do not read your note of 28th July as maintaining that His Majesty's Government are obliged by any rule of international law to give to those who are actively assisting the cause of their enemies, whether they be established in neutral or in enemy territory, the facilities which flow from participation in British commerce. Any such proposition would be so manifestly untenable that there is no reason to refute it. The feelings which I venture to think have prompted the note under reply must have been that the measures which we have been obliged to take will be expanded to an extent which will result in their interfering with genuine neutral commerce; perhaps, also, that they are not exclusively designed for belligerent purposes, but are rather an attempt to forward our own trade interests at the expense of neutral commerce, under the cloak of belligerency; and lastly, that they are, from a military point of view, unnecessary.

Upon these points I am able to give to the Government and people of the United States the fullest assurances. Upon the first point it is true, as your note says, that the name of a firm may be added to the statutory list of persons with whom British persons may not trade whenever, on account of the enemy association of such firm, it seems expedient to do so. But the Government of the United States can feel confident that this system of prohibitions will not be carried further than is absolutely necessary. It has been forced

upon us by the circumstances of the present war. To extend it beyond what is required in order to secure its immediate purpose—the weakening of the resources of our opponents—or to allow it to interfere with what is really the genuine neutral trade of a country with which we desire to have the closest commercial intercourse, would be contrary to British interests. The advantage derived from a commercial transaction between a British subject and a foreigner is mutual, and for His Majesty's Government to forbid a British subject to trade with the citizen of any foreign country necessarily entails some diminution of commercial opportunity for that British subject, and therefore some loss both to him and to his country. Consequently the United States Government, even if they are willing to ignore the whole tradition and tendency of British policy towards the commerce of other nations, might be confident that self-interest alone would render his Majesty's Government anxious not to place upon the statutory list the name of any firm which carries on a genuine *bona fide* neutral trade. If they did so, Great Britain herself would be the loser.

As to the second point, there seem to be individuals in the United States and elsewhere whom it is almost impossible to convince that the measures we take are measures against our enemies, and not intended merely to foster our own trade at the expense of that of neutral countries. I can only reiterate, what has been repeatedly explained before, that His Majesty's Government have no such unworthy object in view. We have, in fact, in all the steps we have taken to prevent British subjects from trading with these specified firms, been most careful to cause the least possible dislocation of neutral trade, as much in our interests as in those of the neutral.

#### DOMICILE AND NATIONALITY

I turn now to the question whether the circumstances of the present war are such as to justify resort on the part of His Majesty's Government to this novel expedient.

As the United States Government are well aware, the Anglo-American practice has in times past been to treat domicile as the test of enemy character, in contradistinction to the Continental practice, which has always regarded nationality as the test. The Anglo-American rule crystallized at the time when means of transport and communication were less developed than now; and when in consequence the



actions of a person established in a distant country could have but little influence upon a struggle.

To-day the position is very different. The activities of enemy subjects are ubiquitous, and under modern conditions it is easy for them, wherever resident, to remit money to any place where it may be required for the use of their own Government, or to act in other ways calculated to assist its purposes and to damage the interests of the Powers with whom it is at war. No elaborate exposition of the situation is required to show that full use has been and is being made of these opportunities.

The experience of the war has proved abundantly, as the United States Government will readily admit, that many Germans in neutral countries have done all in their power to help the cause of their own country and to injure that of the Allies; in fact, it would be no exaggeration to say that German houses abroad have in a large number of cases been used as an integral part of an organization deliberately conceived and planned as an engine for the furtherance of German political and military ambitions. It is common knowledge that German business establishments in foreign countries have been not merely centres of German trade, but active agents for the dissemination of German political and social influence, and for the purpose of espionage. In some cases they have even been used as bases of supply for German cruisers, and in other cases as organizers and paymasters of miscreants employed to destroy by foul means factories engaged in making, or ships engaged in carrying, supplies required by the Allies. Such operations have been carried out in the territory even of the United States itself, and I am bound to observe, what I do not think will be denied, that no adequate action has yet been taken by the Government of the United States to suppress breaches of neutrality of this particularly criminal kind, which I know that they are the first to discountenance and deplore.

In the face of enemy activities of this nature, it was essential for His Majesty's Government to take steps that should at least deprive interests so strongly hostile of the facilities and advantages of unrestricted trading with British subjects. The public opinion of this country would not have tolerated the prolongation of the war by the continued liberty of British subjects to trade with and so to enrich the firms in foreign countries whose wealth and influence were alike at the service of the enemy.

Let me repeat that His Majesty's Government make no such claim to dictate to citizens of the United States, nor to those of any other neutral country, as to the persons with whom they are or are not to trade. They do, however, maintain the right, which in the present crisis is also their duty towards the people of this country and to their Allies, to withhold British facilities from those who conduct their trade for the benefit of our enemies. If the value to these firms of British facilities is such as to lead them to prefer to give up their trade with our enemies rather than to run the risk of being deprived of such facilities, his Majesty's Government cannot admit that their acceptance of guarantees to that effect is either arbitrary or incompatible with international law or comity.

#### THE MILITARY SITUATION

There is another matter with which I should like to deal.

The idea would seem to be prevalent in some quarters that the military position is now such that it is unnecessary for His Majesty's Government to take any steps which might prejudice, even to a slight extent, the commerce of neutral countries; that the end of the war is in sight, and that nothing which happens in distant neutral countries can affect the ultimate result.

If that were really the position, it is possible that the measures taken by His Majesty's Government might be described as uncalled for; but it is not. We may well wish that it were so. Even though the military situation of the Allies has greatly improved, there is still a long and bitter struggle in front of them, and one which, in justice to the principles for which they are fighting, imposes upon them the duty of employing every opportunity and every measure which they can legitimately use to overcome their opponents.

One observation which is very commonly heard is that certain belligerent acts, even though lawful, are too petty to have any influence upon a struggle of such magnitude. It is, I know, difficult for those who have no immediate contact with war to realize with what painful anxiety men and women in this country must regard even the smallest acts which tend to increase, if only by a hair's breadth, the danger in which their relatives and friends daily stand, or to prolong, if only by a minute, the period during which they are to be exposed to such perils.

Whatever inconvenience may be caused to neutral nations

by the exercise of belligerent rights, it is not to be compared for an instant to the suffering and loss occasioned to mankind by the prolongation of the war even for a week.

One other matter should be mentioned—namely, the exclusion from ships using British coal of goods belonging to firms on the statutory list. This is enforced by rendering it a condition of the supply of bunker coal. What legal objection can be taken to this course? It is British coal; why should it be used to transport the goods of those who are actively assisting our enemies? Nor is this the only point. It must be remembered that the German Government by their submarine warfare have sought to diminish the world's tonnage; they have sunk illegally and without warning hundreds of peaceful merchant ships belonging not only to Allied countries, but to neutrals as well. Norwegian, Danish, Swedish, Dutch, Spanish, Greek ships have all been sunk. Between 1st June and 30th September, 1916, 262 vessels have been sunk, by enemy submarines; 72 of these were British, 123 Allied, and 66 neutrals. These totals included 10 British vessels, which were sunk without warning and involved the loss of 81 lives; two Allied, one of which involved the loss of two lives, no information being available as to the other; and three neutral, involving the loss of one life. Even so the list is incomplete. Probably other vessels were sunk without warning and more lives than those enumerated were lost. It may be added that where those on board did escape it was, as a rule, only by taking to open boats.

One of the first enterprises to feel the loss of tonnage has been the Commission for Relief in Belgium; Relief ships have themselves been repeatedly sunk; and in spite of all the efforts of His Majesty's Government, in spite of the special facilities given for the supply of coal to ships engaged in the Commission's service, that body is constantly unable to import into Belgium the foodstuffs absolutely necessary to preserve the life of the population. Can it then, be wondered that the British Government are anxious to limit the supply of British coal in such a way as to reserve it as far as possible to ships genuinely employed in Allied or neutral trade?

#### TRUSTEES OF SEA-POWER

There is, indeed, one preoccupation in regard to this use of coaling advantages by His Majesty's Government

which is no doubt present in the minds of neutrals, and which I recognize. I refer to the apprehension that the potential control over means of transportation thus possessed by one nation might be used for the disruption of the trade of the world in the selfish interests of that nation. His Majesty's Government therefore take this opportunity to declare that they are not unmindful of the obligations of those who possess sea-power, nor of that traditional policy pursued by the British Empire by which such power has been regarded as a trust and has been exercised in the interests of freedom. They require no representations to recall such considerations to mind, but they cannot admit that, in the circumstances of the times, their present use of their coal resources—a use which only differs in extent from that exercised by the United States in the Civil War in the case of vessels proceeding to such ports as Nassau—is obnoxious to their duties or their voluntary professions.

In conclusion, I cannot refrain from calling to mind the instructions issued by Lord Russell on 5th July, 1862, to the merchants of Liverpool in regard to trade with the Bahamas. His Lordship there advised British subjects that their "true remedy" would be to "refrain from this species of trade," on the ground that "it exposes innocent commerce to vexatious detention and search by American cruisers."

His Majesty's Government do not ask the Government of the United States to take any such action as this, but they cannot believe that the United States Government will question their right to lay upon British merchants, in the interests of the safety of the British Empire, for which they are responsible, the same prohibitions as Lord Russell issued fifty years ago, out of consideration for the interests and feelings of a foreign nation. Suspensions and insinuations which would construe so simple an action as an opening for secret and unavowed designs on neutral rights should have no place in the relations between two friendly countries.

I trust that the explanations contained in this note will destroy such suspicions, and correct the erroneous views which prevail in the United States on the subject.

## APPENDIX III

### THE RIGHTS OF 'NEUTRALS

#### CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN SIR E. GREY AND THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN LONDON

THE following correspondence between Sir Edward Grey and the American Ambassador in London on the subject of Prize Court proceedings in cases where American interests may be involved was issued by the Foreign Office:—

MR. PAGE TO SIR EDWARD GREY

*(Received 17th July)*

AMERICAN EMBASSY, LONDON.

SIR,

16th July, 1915.

I have the honour to acquaint you that I have received instructions from my Government to make known to you their attitude for the purpose of avoiding any misunderstandings in regard to Prize Court proceedings in cases in which American interests may be involved.

The Government of the United States, in view of differences which are understood to exist between the two countries as to the principles of law applicable in cases before the Prize Court, desire to make clear to His Majesty's Government that in so far as the interests of American citizens are involved the Government of the United States feel constrained to insist upon the rights of their citizens under the hitherto established principles and rules governing neutral trade in time of war, without modification or limitation of Orders in Council or other municipal legislation by the Government of Great Britain.

I am instructed to add that the Government of the United States cannot recognize the validity of proceedings taken in His Majesty's Prize Court under restraints imposed by the municipal law of Great Britain in derogation of the rights of American citizens.

I have, etc.,

WALTER HINES PAGE.

MR. PAGE TO SIR EDWARD GREY

(Received 19th July)

AMERICAN EMBASSY, LONDON.

SIR,

17th July, 1915.

I have the honour to acquaint you that I am in receipt of instructions from my Government to request your consideration of the following matter, which it regards as being of the utmost importance:—

It has been brought to the attention of the Secretary of State that the steamship *Neches*, of American register, sailing from Rotterdam to a port of the United States, carrying general cargo, was detained in the Downs and brought to London, where its captain was obliged by His Majesty's authorities to discharge the cargo, the property of American citizens.

The ground advanced to sustain this action it appears, is that the goods in question originated, in part, at least, in Belgium, and fell therefore within the provisions of paragraph 4 of the Order in Council of 11th March, which stipulates that every merchant-vessel sailing from a port other than a German port carrying goods of enemy origin may be required to discharge such goods in a British or allied port.

The Government of the United States very earnestly reiterates its position with respect to this Order in Council, as set forth in the note which I had the honour to address to you on the 2nd April, 1915, and regards the international invalidity of the order as plainly illustrated in the present instance of the seizure of American-owned goods passing from the neutral port of Rotterdam to a neutral port of the United States, merely because the goods came originally from territory in the possession of Great Britain's enemy.

In view of the position of my Government as set forth above, I am instructed to acquaint you that the legality of the seizure of these goods on board the *Neches* by His Majesty's authorities cannot be admitted by the Government of the United States, and that it considers that the course pursued is in violation of the right of the citizens of one neutral country to trade with those of another, as well as with those of belligerents, except in contraband or in contravention of a legal blockade of an enemy seaport. My Government feels that it must insist upon the rights of American owners to bring their goods out of Holland in due course in neutral

ships, even though such goods may have come originally from the territories of a country at war with Great Britain.

I am furthermore directed to communicate my Government's insistent request that goods taken from the steamship *Neches*, which are the property of American citizens, shall be expeditiously released to be forwarded to their destination.

I venture to ask that you will be so good as to let me be informed at the earliest convenient moment as to the course of His Majesty's Government in this connection.

I have, etc.,

WALTER HINES PAGE.

SIR EDWARD GREY TO MR. PAGE

FOREIGN OFFICE, 30th July, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

The note which your Excellency addressed to me on the 17th instant respecting the detention of the cargo of the steamship *Neches* has, I need hardly say, received the careful attention of His Majesty's Government.

The note which I had the honour to send to your Excellency on the 23rd instant has already explained the view of His Majesty's Government on the legal aspect of the question, though it was prepared before your Excellency's communication of the 17th had been received; and pending consideration by the Government of the United States of the views and arguments set forth in the British note of the 23rd, it is unnecessary for me to say more on the question of right or of law.

There is, however, one general observation that seems relevant to the note from your Excellency respecting the cargo of the *Neches*.

It is the practice of the German Government in the waters through which the *Neches* was passing to sink neutral as well as British merchant vessels, irrespective of the destination of the vessel, of the destination or origin of the cargo, and without proper regard or provision for the safety of passengers or crews, many of whom have lost their lives in consequence. There can be no question that this action is contrary to the recognized and settled rules of international law, as well as to the principles of humanity.

His Majesty's Government, on the other hand, have adhered to the rules of visit and search, and have observed the obligation to bring into port and submit to a Prize Court any ships or cargoes with regard to which they think

## 338 The British Navy during the War [1915]

they have a good case for detention or for condemnation as contraband.

His Majesty's Government are not aware, except from the published correspondence between the United States and Germany, to what extent reparation has been claimed from Germany by neutrals for loss of ships, lives, and cargoes nor how far these acts have been the subject even of protest by the neutral Governments concerned.

While these acts of the German Government continue it seems neither reasonable nor just that His Majesty's Government should be pressed to abandon the rights claimed in the British note of the 23rd and to allow goods from Germany to pass freely through waters effectively patrolled by British ships of war.

If, however, it be alleged that in particular cases and special circumstances hardship may be inflicted on citizens of neutral countries, His Majesty's Government are ready in such cases to examine the facts in a spirit of consideration for the interest of neutrals, and in this spirit they are prepared to deal with the cargo of the *Neches*, to which your Excellency has called attention, if it is held that the particular circumstances of this case fall within this category.

I have, etc.,

E. GREY.

SIR EDWARD GREY TO MR. PAGE

FOREIGN OFFICE, 22nd July, 1915.

MY DEAR AMBASSADOR,

I am sending you a note, which had been prepared and was ready before the notes from your Government about our Prize Court proceedings and the *Neches* case were sent in last week.

The note I now send you was, therefore, written without reference to these latter notes; but I think it well to send it, as it explains more clearly than has yet been done why we have felt ourselves compelled to take the measures that were initiated last March, and the grounds on which we consider that they may be justified.

The notes that you have sent in about the Prize Court proceedings and the *Neches* case are receiving careful consideration, and I hope to send you an answer on both of them next week.

I do not propose to publish the note pending an agree-



ment with your Government as to the date on which this should be done.

Yours sincerely,  
E. GREY.

[ENCLOSURE]

SIR EDWARD GREY TO MR. PAGE

FOREIGN OFFICE, 23rd July, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

On the 2nd April your Excellency handed to me a copy of a communication containing the criticisms of the United States Government on the measures we have been constrained to take on account of the menace to peaceful commerce resulting from the German submarine policy. This communication has received the most careful consideration of His Majesty's Government.

I fully appreciate the friendly spirit and the candour which are shown in the communication, and, replying in the same spirit, I trust that I may be able to convince your Excellency, and also the Administration at Washington, that the measures we have announced are not only reasonable and necessary in themselves, but constitute no more than an adaptation of the old principles of blockade to the peculiar circumstances with which we are confronted.

I need scarcely dwell on the obligation incumbent upon the Allies to take every step in their power to overcome their common enemy, in view of the shocking violation of the recognized rules and principles of civilized warfare of which he has been guilty during the present struggle. Your Excellency's attention has already been drawn to some of these proceedings in the memorandum which I handed to you on the 19th February. Since that time Lord Bryce's Report, based on evidence carefully sifted by legal experts, describing the atrocities committed in Belgium—the poisoning of wells in German South-West Africa; the use of poisonous gases against the troops in Flanders; and, finally, the sinking of the *Lusitania*, without any opportunity to passengers and non-combatants to save their lives, have shown how indispensable it is that we should leave unused no justifiable method of defending ourselves.

Your Excellency will remember that in my notes of the 13th and 15th March I explained that the Allied Governments intended to meet the German attempt to stop all

supplies of every kind from leaving or entering British or French ports by themselves intercepting goods going to or from Germany. I read the communication from your Excellency's Government not as questioning the necessity for our taking all the steps open to us to cripple the enemy's trade, but as directed solely to the question of the legitimacy of the particular measures adopted.

In the various notes which I have received from your Excellency, the right of a belligerent to establish a blockade of the enemy ports is admitted—a right which has obviously no value save in so far as it gives power to a belligerent to cut off the sea-borne exports and imports of his enemy. The contention which, I understand, the United States Government now put forward is that, if a belligerent is so circumstanced that his commerce can pass through adjacent neutral ports as easily as through ports in his own territory, his opponent has no right to interfere, and must restrict his measures of blockade in such a manner as to leave such avenues of commerce still open to his adversary. This is a contention which His Majesty's Government feel unable to accept, and which seems to them unsustainable either in point of law or upon principles of international equity. They are unable to admit that a belligerent violates any fundamental principle of international law by applying a blockade in such a way as to cut off the enemy's commerce with foreign countries through neutral ports if the circumstances render such an application of the principles of blockade the only means of making it effective. The Government of the United States, indeed, intimates its readiness to take into account "the great changes which have occurred in the conditions and means of naval warfare since the rules hitherto governing legal blockade were formulated," and recognizes that "the form of close blockade, with its cordon of ships in the immediate offing of the blockaded ports, is no longer practicable in the face of an enemy possessing the means and opportunity to make an effective defence by the use of submarines, mines, and aircraft."

The only question, then, which can arise in regard to the measures resorted to for the purpose of carrying out a blockade upon these extended lines is whether, to use your Excellency's words, they "conform to the spirit and principles of the essence of the rules of war," and we shall be content to apply this test to the action which we have taken in so far as it has necessitated interference with neutral commerce.

It may be noted in this connexion that at the time of the Civil War the United States found themselves under the necessity of declaring a blockade of some 3,000 miles of coast-line, a military operation for which the number of vessels available was at first very small. It was vital to the cause of the United States in that great struggle that they should be able to cut off the trade of the southern States. The Confederate armies were dependent on supplies from overseas, and those supplies could not be obtained without exporting the cotton wherewith to pay for them; to cut off this trade the United States could only rely upon a blockade. The difficulties confronting the Federal Government were in part due to the fact that neighbouring neutral territory afforded convenient centres from which contraband could be introduced into the territory of their enemies and from which blockade running could be facilitated. Your Excellency will no doubt remember how, in order to meet this new difficulty, the old principles relating to contraband and blockade were developed and the doctrine of continuous voyage was applied and enforced, under which goods destined for the enemy territory were intercepted before they reached the neutral ports from which they were to be re-exported.

The difficulties which imposed upon the United States the necessity of reshaping some of the old rules are somewhat akin to those with which the Allies are now faced in dealing with the trade of their enemy. Adjacent to Germany are various neutral countries which afford her convenient opportunities for carrying on her trade with foreign countries. Her own territories are covered by a network of railways and waterways, which enable her commerce to pass as conveniently through ports in such neutral countries as through her own. A blockade limited to enemy ports, would leave open routes by which every kind of German commerce could pass almost as easily as through the ports in her own territory. Rotterdam is indeed the nearest outlet for some of the industrial districts of Germany.

As a counterpoise to the freedom with which one belligerent may send his commerce across a neutral country without compromising its neutrality, the other belligerent may fairly claim to intercept such commerce before it has reached, or after it has left, the neutral State, provided, of course, that he can establish that the commerce with which he interferes is the commerce of his enemy and not commerce which is *bona fide* destined for, or proceeding from, the neutral State. It

seems accordingly that, if it be recognized that a blockade is in certain cases the appropriate method of intercepting the trade of an enemy country, and if the blockade can only become effective by extending it to enemy commerce passing through neutral ports, such an extension is defensible and in accordance with principles which have met with general acceptance.

To the contention that such action is not directly supported by written authority it may be replied that it is the business of writers on international law to formulate existing rules rather than to offer suggestions for their adaptation to altered circumstances, and your Excellency will remember the unmeasured terms in which a group of prominent international lawyers of all nations condemned the doctrine which had been laid down by the Supreme Court of the United States in the case of the *Springbok*—a doctrine upheld by the Claims Commission at Washington in 1873. But the United States and the British Government took a broader view, and looked below the surface at the underlying principles; and the Government of this country, whose nationals were the sufferers by the extension and development of the old methods of blockade made by the United States during the Civil War, abstained from all protest against the decisions by which the ships and their cargoes were condemned.

What is really important in the general interest is that adaptations of the old rules should not be made unless they are consistent with the general principles upon which an admitted belligerent right is based. It is also essential that all unnecessary injury to neutrals should be avoided. With these conditions it may be safely affirmed that the steps we are taking to intercept commodities on their way to and from Germany fully comply. We are interfering with no goods with which we should not be entitled to interfere by blockade if the geographical position and the conditions of Germany at present were such that her commerce passed through her own ports. We are taking the utmost possible care not to interfere with commerce genuinely destined for or proceeding from neutral countries. Furthermore, we have tempered the severity with which our measures might press upon neutrals by not applying the rule which was invariable in the old form of blockade, that ships and goods on their way to or from the blockaded area are liable to condemnation.

The communication made by the United States Embassy on the 2nd April describes as a novel and quite unprece-

dedented feature of the blockade that it embraces many neutral ports and coasts and has the effect of barring access to them. It does not appear that our measures can be properly so described. If we are successful in the efforts we are making to distinguish between the commerce of neutral and enemy countries, there will be no substantial interference with the trade of neutral ports except in so far as they constitute ports of access to and exit from the enemy territory. There are at this moment many neutral ports which it would be mere affectation to regard as offering facilities only for the commerce of the neutral country in which they are situated; and the only commerce with which we propose to interfere is that of the enemy, who seeks to make use of such ports for the purposes of transit to or from his own country.

One of the earlier passages in your Excellency's memorandum was to the effect that the sovereignty of neutral nations in time of war suffers no diminution except in so far as the practice and consent of civilized nations has limited it "by the recognition of certain now clearly determined rights," which it is considered may be exercised by nations at war, and these it defines as the right of capture and condemnation for unneutral service, for the carriage of contraband, and for breach of blockade. I may, however, be permitted to point out that the practice of nations on each of the three subjects mentioned has not at any time been uniform or clearly determined, nor has the practice of any maritime nation always been consistent.

There are various particulars in which the exact method of carrying a blockade into effect has from time to time varied. The need of a public notification, the requisite standard of effectiveness, the locality of the blockading squadrons, the right of the individual ship to a preliminary warning that the blockade is in force, and the penalty to be inflicted on a captured blockade runner are all subjects on which different views have prevailed in different countries, and in which the practice of particular countries has been altered from time to time. The one principle which is fundamental and has obtained universal recognition is that, by means of blockade, a belligerent is entitled to cut off by effective means the sea-borne commerce of his enemy.

It is the same with contraband. The underlying principle is well established, but as to the details there has been a wide variety of view. As for unneutral service, the very term is of such recent introduction that many writers of

repute on international law do not even mention it. It is impossible, in the view of His Majesty's Government, in these circumstances to maintain that the right of a belligerent to intercept the commerce of his enemy is limited in the way suggested in your Excellency's communication.

There are certain subsidiary matters dealt with in your Excellency's communication to which I think it well to refer. Amongst these may be mentioned your citation of the Declaration of Paris, due, no doubt, to the words which occur in the memorandum sent by me to your Excellency on the 1st March, wherein it was stated that the Allied Governments would hold themselves free to detain and take into port ships carrying goods of presumed enemy destination, ownership, or origin, and to our announcement that vessels might be required to discharge goods of enemy ownership as well as those of enemy origin or destination.

It is not necessary to discuss the extent to which the second rule of the Declaration of Paris is affected by these measures, or whether it could be held to apply at all as between Great Britain and the United States. In actual practice, however, we are not detaining goods on the sole ground that they are the property of an enemy. The purpose of the measures we are taking is to intercept commerce on its way from and to the enemy country. There are many cases in which proof that the goods were enemy property would afford strong evidence that they were of enemy origin or enemy destination, and it is only in such cases that we are detaining them. Where proof of enemy ownership would afford no evidence of such origin or destination we are not in practice detaining the goods.

His Majesty's Government have been gratified to observe that the measures which they are enforcing have had no detrimental effect on the commerce of the United States. Figures of recent months show that the increased opportunities afforded by the war for American commerce have more than compensated for the loss of the German and Austrian markets.

I trust that in the light of the above explanations it will be realized that the measures to which we have resorted have been not only justified by the exigencies of the case, but can be defended as in accordance with general principles which have commended themselves to the Governments of both countries. I am glad to be able to assure your Excellency that we shall continue to apply these measures with

every desire to occasion the least possible amount of inconvenience to persons engaged in legitimate commerce.

I have, etc.,

E. GREY.

SIR EDWARD GREY TO MR. PAGE

FOREIGN OFFICE, 31st July, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the note dated the 16th instant, in which you were good enough to communicate to me, for the information of His Majesty's Government, the opinion held by the Government of the United States that, in view of the differences which they understand to exist between the two countries as to the principles of law applicable in cases before the Prize Court, they could not recognize the validity of proceedings taken in His Majesty's Prize Court in derogation of the rights of citizens of the United States.

I do not understand to what divergence of views as to the principles of law applicable in cases before the Prize Court the Government of the United States refer, for I am not aware of any differences existing between the two countries as to the principles of law applicable in cases before such Courts.

British Prize Courts, according to the ancient form of commission under which they sit, are to determine cases which come before them "according to the course of Admiralty, and the law of nations, and the statutes, rules, and regulations for the time being in force in that behalf." As to the principles applied by the American Prize Courts, I note that, in the case of the *Amy Warwick* (2 Sprague, 123), it was held that "Prize Courts are subject to the instructions of their own Sovereign. In the absence of such instructions their jurisdiction and rules of decision are to be ascertained by reference to the known powers of such tribunals, and the principles by which they are governed under the public law and the practice of nations." It would appear, therefore, that the principles applied by the Prize Courts of the two countries are identical.

As illustrating further the attitude adopted by the judges of British Prize Courts towards these two sources of law, the municipal legislation of its Sovereign on the one hand and the principles of international law on the other, I should like to refer your Excellency to a classical passage in the judg-

ment of Lord Stowell in the case of the *Fox*, in which that famous judge observed :—

In the course of the discussion a question has been started, What would be the duty of the Court under Orders in Council that were repugnant to the law of nations ?

It has been contended on one side that the Court would at all events be found to enforce the Orders in Council ; on the other, that the Court would be bound to apply the rule of the law of nations adopted to the particular case in disregard of the Orders in Council. . . . This Court is bound to administer the law of nations to the subjects of other countries in the different relations in which they may be placed towards this country and its Government. That is what others have a right to demand for their subjects, and to complain if they receive it not. This is its unwritten law, evidenced in the course of its decisions, and collected from the common usage of civilized States. At the same time, it is strictly true that, by the Constitution of this country, the King in Council possesses legislative rights over this Court, and has power to issue orders and instructions which it is bound to obey and enforce ; and these constitute the written law of this Court. These two propositions, that the Court is bound to administer the law of nations, and that it is bound to enforce the King's Orders in Council, are not at all inconsistent with each other, because these orders and instructions are presumed to conform themselves, under the given circumstances, to the principles of its unwritten law. They are either directory applications of these principles to the cases indicated in them—cases which, with all the facts and circumstances belonging to them, and which constitute their legal character, could be but imperfectly known to the Court itself ; or they are positive regulations, consistent with these principles applying to matters which require more exact and definite rules than those general principles are capable of furnishing. The constitution of this Court, relatively to the legislative power of the King in Council, is analogous to that of the Courts of common law, relatively to the Parliament of this kingdom. These Courts have their unwritten law, the approved principles of natural reason and justice ; they have likewise the written or statute



law, in Acts of Parliament, which are directory applications of the same principles to particular subjects, or positive regulations consistent with them, upon matters which would remain too much at large if they were left to the imperfect information which the Courts could extract from mere general speculations. What would be the duty of the individuals who preside in these Courts, if required to enforce an Act of Parliament which contradicted those principles, is a question which I presume they would not entertain *a priori*; because they will not entertain *a priori* the supposition that any such will arise. In like manner, this Court will not let itself loose into speculations, as to what would be its duty under such an emergency; because it cannot, without extreme indecency, presume that any such emergency will happen. And it is the less disposed to entertain them, because its own observation and experience attest the general conformity of such orders and instructions to its principles of unwritten law.

The above passage has recently been quoted and adopted by the President of the Prize Court in the case of the *Zamora*, in which Sir S. Evans said:

I make bold to express the hope and belief that the nations of the world need not be apprehensive that Orders in Council will emanate from the Government of this country in such violation of the acknowledged law of nations that it is conceivable that our Prize Tribunals, holding the law of nations in reverence, would feel called upon to disregard and refuse obedience to the provisions of such Orders.

In the note which I handed to your Excellency on the 23rd July I endeavoured to convince the Government of the United States, and I trust with success, that the measures which we have felt ourselves compelled to adopt, in consequence of the numerous acts committed by our enemies in violation of the laws of war and the dictates of humanity, are consistent with the principles of international law. The legality of these measures has not yet formed the subject of a decision of the Prize Court; but I wish to take this opportunity of reminding your Excellency that it is open to any United States citizen whose claim is before the Prize Court to contend that any Order in Council which may affect his

claim is inconsistent with the principles of international law and is, therefore, not binding upon the Court. If the Prize Court declines to accept his contentions, and if, after such a decision has been upheld on appeal by the Judicial Committee of His Majesty's Privy Council, the Government of the United States of America consider that there is serious ground for holding that the decision is incorrect and infringes the rights of their citizens, it is open to them to claim that it should be subjected to review by an international tribunal.

This principle, that the decisions of the National Prize Courts may properly be subjected to international review, was conceded by Great Britain in article 7 of the Jay Treaty of 1793, and by the United States of America under the Treaty of Washington of 1871. Your Excellency will no doubt remember that certain cases (collectively known as the "Matamoros cases") were submitted to the Commission established under articles 12-17 of the Treaty of Washington. In each of these cases proceedings in prize had been instituted in the Prize Courts of the United States, and in each case the judgment of the Supreme Court, the court of last resort in cases of prize, had been obtained. The United States filed a demurrer in these cases, alleging that, as they had been heard by the Prize Courts of the United States of original and appellate jurisdiction, the decision of the Appellate Court was final, and no claim based upon it could be made before the Commission. The demurrer was unanimously over-ruled and the cases heard, and the agent of the United States, in his report upon the proceedings of the Commission, stated that he personally "maintained no doubt of the jurisdiction of the Commission, as an international tribunal, to review the decisions of the Prize Courts of the United States, where the parties alleging themselves aggrieved had prosecuted their claims by appeal to the court of last resort. As this jurisdiction, however, had been sometimes questioned he deemed it desirable that a formal adjudication by the Commission should be had upon this question."

The same principle was accepted both by the United States Government and His Majesty's Government, in 1907, in connection with the proposed establishment of an International Prize Court, although certain constitutional difficulties have led the United States Government to propose that the right of recourse to the International Prize Court in connection with a decision of the Supreme Court of the

United States should take the form of a direct claim for compensation.

It is clear, therefore, that both the United States Government and His Majesty's Government have adopted the principle that the decisions of a national Prize Court may be open to review. If it is held in the Prize Court and in the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on appeal, that the orders and instructions issued by His Majesty's Government in matters relating to prize are in harmony with the principles of international law, and should the Government of the United States unfortunately feel compelled to maintain a contrary view, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to concert with the United States Government in order to decide upon the best way of applying the above principle to the situation which would then have arisen. I trust, however, that the defence of our action which I have already communicated to your Excellency, and the willingness of His Majesty's Government (which has been shown in so many instances) to make reasonable concessions to American interests, will prevent the necessity for such action arising.

In any case, I trust that the explanations given above will remove the misapprehension, under which I cannot but feel the Government of the United States are labouring, as to the principles applied by British Prize Courts in dealing with the cases which come before them.

I have, etc.,

E. GREY.

## APPENDIX IV

### THE BRITISH NAVAL ACHIEVEMENT

#### MR. BALFOUR'S LETTER

THE First Lord of the Admiralty addressed the following letter to Mr. Tuohy, of the *New York World* :—

31st July, 1915.

DEAR MR. TUOHY,

I am obliged to you for showing me a copy of the communication from Count Reventlow entitled "A Year of Naval Warfare," which has just been published in the *New York World*. I am not quite sure that I comprehend the purpose with which it has been written, but in accordance with your desire I am making a few observations upon its contents.

The introductory paragraph calls for no comment from me. Count Reventlow explains why the German Fleet was not completed during the fifteen years which have elapsed since the first Navy Bill, and recounts some of the political miscalculations of the German Government through which, as he believes, the German Fleet in the North Sea has been put in a position of numerical inferiority. These are points on which perhaps Count Reventlow speaks with authority; in any case they only concern his own country. But when he incidentally declares that England "desired to attack Germany," he blunders into a controversy where he will hardly receive so respectful a hearing. The world, though he may not know it, has long made up its mind as to who is the aggressor in the present war; and I should have thought it hardly worth his while to repeat such charges outside the limits of the German Empire.

The main purpose, however, of Count Reventlow's communication is to praise the performances of the German Fleet; and certainly it is no purpose of mine to belittle the courage or the skill of the sailors composing it. I doubt

not that they have done all that was possible both in the honourable warfare to which doubtless they were inclined, and in the dishonourable warfare required of them by their superiors. But what, in this the first year of the war, have they accomplished by either method? He tells us that we—the British—have failed to induce the German Fleet to come out and fight us—and certainly we have. So far the German Fleet has thought it wise to avoid engaging a superior force, and I am the last person to blame them. But this surely is hardly to be counted as a triumph of either tactics or strategy; it is a military exploit which, however judicious, would be well within the competence of the least efficient fleet and the most incapable commander.

#### FAILURE OF THE HIGH SEA FLEET

The truth is that the German High Sea Fleet has so far done nothing, and probably has not been in a position to do anything. At the beginning of the war we were told that by a process of continual attrition it was proposed to reduce the superior British Fleet ship by ship until an equality was established between the two antagonists. The design has completely failed. The desired equality is more remote than it was twelve months ago; and this would be true even if certain extraordinary mis-statements about such small actions as have occurred in the North Sea had any foundation in fact. He tells us, for example, that in the skirmish of 28th August, when some German cruisers were destroyed, the English squadron suffered heavy damage. This is quite untrue. He tells us, again, that in the skirmish of 24th January last, when the *Blücher* was sunk, the British lost a new battle cruiser (the *Tiger*). This is also untrue. In that engagement we did not lose a cockle boat. I do not know that these mis-statements are of any great moment. But for the benefit of those who think otherwise, let me say that in no sea fight, except that off the coast of Chile, has any ship of the English Fleet been either sunk or seriously damaged.

#### WAR ON CIVILIANS

Apart from these purely imaginary triumphs, the only performance of German warships in the North Sea on which Count Reventlow dwells with pride and satisfaction is the attack by some German cruisers on undefended towns in Yorkshire. This exploit was as inglorious as it was immoral.

Two or three fast cruisers came over the North Sea by night ; at dawn they bombarded an open watering-place ; they killed a certain number of civilian men, women, and children ; and, after an hour and a half of this gallant performance, retired to the safety of their own defended waters. Personally, I think it better to invent stories like the sinking of the *Tiger* than to boast of such a feat of arms as this.

But in truth, if anyone will examine Count Reventlow's apology for the German High Sea Fleet, he will find that it amounts to no more than praise of German mines and German submarines. There is no doubt that German mines, scattered at random and with no warning to neutrals, have been responsible for the destruction of much neutral shipping and of some vessels of war. The first result is deplorable ; the second is legitimate. Mine-laying is not, indeed, a very glorious method of warfare ; though, used against warships, it is perfectly fair. But something more must be said about submarines. Anybody reading Count Reventlow's observations would suppose that submarines were a German invention and that only German foresight had realised that their use would necessitate a modification in battle fleet tactics. But this truth has been among the commonplaces of naval knowledge for years past, and was no more hid from Washington and London than from Berlin and Vienna. What was new in the German use of submarines was not their employment against ships of war, but their employment against defenceless merchantmen and unarmed trawlers. This, it must be owned, was never foreseen either in Washington or London. It is purely German. But Count Reventlow is profoundly mistaken if he supposes that, during the year which has elapsed, these murderous methods have affected in the slightest degree the economic life of England ; what they *have* done is to fix an indelible stain upon the fair fame of the German Navy.

#### SEVEN FUNCTIONS OF A FLEET

If anyone desires to know whether the British Fleet has during the last year proved itself worthy of its traditions, there is a very simple method of arriving at the truth. There are seven, and only seven, functions which a fleet can perform :—

- It may drive the enemy's commerce off the sea.
- It may protect its own commerce.

It may render the enemy's fleet impotent.

It may make the transfer of enemy troops across the sea impossible, whether for attack or defence.

It may transport its own troops where it will.

It may secure their supplies, and (in fitting circumstances) it may assist their operations.

All these functions have so far been successfully performed by the British Fleet. No German merchant ships are to be found on the ocean. Allied commerce is more secure from attack, legitimate and illegitimate, than it was after Trafalgar. The German High Sea Fleet has not as yet ventured beyond the security of its protected waters. No invasion has been attempted of these islands. British troops, in numbers unparalleled in history, have moved to and fro across the seas, and have been effectively supported on shore. The greatest of military Powers has seen its colonies wrested from it one by one, and has not been able to land a man or a gun in their defence. Of a fleet which has done this we may not only say that it has done much, but that no fleet has ever done more. And we citizens of the British Empire can only hope that the second year of the war will show no falling off in its success, as it will assuredly show no relaxation of its efforts.

Pray believe me, yours faithfully,

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.





# INDEX

- Aboukir*, H.M.S., 27, 42, 43, 44, 89  
*Acasta*, H.M.S., 241  
*Acheron*, H.M.S., 26  
*Agamemnon*, H.M.S., 128, 129, 131, 135, 138  
*Albion*, H.M.S., 132, 135, 140, 158  
*Alcantara*, H.M.S., 292  
*Alexander-Sinclair*, Commodore, 227  
*Amethyst*, H.M.S., 27, 139, 153, 169  
*Amphion*, H.M.S., 19, 41  
*Anona*, the sinking of the, 272-3  
*Andes*, H.M.S., 292  
*Anglia*, B.H.S., sunk by German submarine, 271  
*Appam*, capture of the, 291  
*Arabic*, the, 278, 280  
*Arbuthnot*, Rear-Admiral Sir Robert, 224, 242  
*Archer*, H.M.S., 26  
*Ardent*, H.M.S., 256  
*Arethusa*, H.M.S., 26-38, 91, 94, 209, 269  
*Argyll*, H.M.S., 269  
*Ariadne*, the, 291  
*Ariadne* (German), 30, 31, 36, 37  
*Ariel*, H.M.S., 26  
*Ark Royal*, H.M.S., 128, 151  
*Arnot*, Midshipman, 253  
*Askold*, the, 140  
*Aster*, H.M.S., 179  
*Asturias*, B.H.S., 102  
*Attack*, H.M.S., 26, 96  
*Aurora*, H.M.S., 91  
*Australia*, H.M.S., 187  
*Author*, the, 291  
*Babington*, Lieutenant J. T., 208  
*Bacchante*, H.M.S., 27, 151  
*Baden*, the, 68  
*Badger*, H.M.S., 26  
*Barbarossa*, the, 218  
*Barham*, H.M.S., 234  
*Baralong*, H.M.S., 278-281  
*Bartelot*, Lieut. - Commander Nigel, 37  
*Battenberg*, Prince Louis of, 64  
*Beatty*, Vice-Admiral Sir David, 27, 29, 34, 35, 36, 90, 91, 95, 223, 224-319  
*Beaver*, H.M.S., 26  
*Belgium* relief ships sunk, 333  
*Beresford*, Commander J. H., 188  
*Berg*, Lieutenant, 291  
*Berwick*, H.M.S., 46  
*Beseler*, General von, 52, 54  
*Bigsworth*, Squadron - Commander, 277  
*Bingham*, Commander the Hon. E. B. S., 233  
*Birmingham*, H.M.S., 19, 26, 91, 252  
*Black Prince*, H.M.S., 242, 256  
*Bluecher*, the, 77, 79, 82, 89, 96  
*Blunt*, Captain, 26  
*Boué le Lapeyrière*, Admiral, 10  
*Bouvet*, the, 128, 138, 140, 142, 143, 268  
*Boyle*, Commander G. Courtney, 216  
*Braithwaite*, Commander L. W., 197  
*Bremen*, the, 72, 220  
*Breslau*, the, 19, 20, 21, 109  
*Briggs*, Commander E. F., 208  
*Brilliant*, H.M.S., 56  
*Bristol*, H.M.S., 5, 65, 66, 68  
*Brock*, Captain Osmond, 90  
*Brock*, Rear-Admiral, 224  
*Broke*, H.M.S., 309-312  
*Bruce*, Lieut. - Commander K. M., 218  
*Brussels*, the, 307  
*Bulwark*, H.M.S., 88

- Burney, Vice-Admiral Sir Cecil, 243, 248  
 Butter, Lieut.-Commander V. S., 211  
*Calliope*, H.M.S., 249  
*Canopus*, H.M.S., 58-68  
*Canterbury*, H.M.S., 241  
*Cap Trafalgar*, the, 46  
 Carden, Vice-Admiral Sackville, 128, 129, 140  
*Carmania*, H.M.S., 46  
*Carnarvon*, H.M.S., 64-71  
*Castor*, H.M.S., 252  
 Chair, Rear-Admiral Sir Dudley de, 316  
*Champion*, H.M.S., 234, 252  
*Charlemagne*, the, 131, 138, 140  
 Charlton, Rear-Admiral E. F. B., 193-4  
 Chatfield, Captain A. M. S., 90  
*Chatham*, H.M.S., 189  
*Chelmer*, H.M.S., 169  
*Chester*, H.M.S., 239  
 Christian, Rear-Admiral A. H., 27, 30, 37, 42, 177  
*Christopher*, H.M.S., 241  
*Clan MacIvarish*, the, 291  
*Clement Hull*, the, 197  
 Collet, Flight-Lieut. C. H., 206  
*Colne*, H.M.S., 182  
*Colossus*, H.M.S., 248  
*Comet*, H.M.S., 202-4  
*Comus*, H.M.S., 292  
 Cookson, Lieut.-Commander, 203  
*Coquette*, H.M.S., 269  
*Corbridge*, the, 291  
*Cornwall*, H.M.S., 65-70  
 Cornwall, John Travers, 239  
*Cornwallis*, H.M.S., 128, 131, 158  
 Cradock, Rear-Admiral Sir Christopher, 58, 59, 60, 62, 64, 67, 70, 73  
*Cressy*, H.M.S., 27, 42, 43, 44, 89  
*Cumberland*, H.M.S., 192  
 Davies, Commander R B., 208, 209  
*Defence*, H.M.S., 241, 242, 256  
*Defender*, H.M.S., 26, 33, 242, 261  
 Dennistoun, Lieut.-Commander, 198  
*Derfflinger*, the, 75, 32, 83, 89, 92-6  
 Destroyers (German).—*S115*, *S117*, *S118*, *S119*, 51, *V187*, 31, 37, *V69*, 308  
*Devonshire*, H.M.S., 5  
 Dobell, Brigadier-General, 192  
 Dohna-Schlodien, Count von und zu, 290, 291  
*Doon*, H.M.S., 82  
 D'Oyley-Hughes, Lieutenant Guy, 172-3  
*Dresden*, the, 57, 61, 67, 70-2  
 Drewry, Midshipman, G. L., 155; 156  
*Dromonby*, the, 291  
*Dublin*, H.M.S., 153, 252  
*Duke of Edinburgh*, H.M.S., 249  
*Dwarf*, H.M.S., 192  
*Eckbatana*, the, 200  
*Eden*, H.M.S., 269  
*Edinburgh*, the, 291  
*Elbing*, the, 255  
 Elkes, Lieut.-Commander J. G. M., 201  
*Emden*, the, 45, 49, 57, 189, 190, 191  
*Endymion*, H.M.S., 179  
*Engadine*, H.M.S., 227, 239  
*Espiègle*, H.M.S., 200, 201, 202  
*Euryalus*, H.M.S., 27, 169  
 Evans, Commander E. R. G. R., 310  
*Falaba*, the, 103  
*Falcon*, H.M.S., 56  
*Falmouth*, H.M.S., 26, 34, 242, 306  
 Farie, Captain James, 252  
*Farringford*, the, 291  
*Fearless*, H.M.S., 26, 8, 30, 33, 38, 234, 252  
*Ferret*, H.M.S., 26  
*Firedrake*, H.M.S., 26-8, 32, 33, 38  
*Firefly*, H.M.S., 203  
 Fisher, Lord, 4, 64, 288  
*Flamenco*, the, 291

- Flirt*, H.M.S., 308  
*Forester*, H.M.S., 26  
*Formidable*, H.M.S., 88, 89, 111  
*Fortune*, H.M.S., 256  
*For*, Captain Cecil, 19, 51  
*Frauenlob*, the, 256  
*French*, Sir John, 26  
*Fryat*, capture of Captain, 307  
*Funke*, Rear-Admiral, 79, 85  
  
*Galatea*, H.M.S., 227  
*Gaulois*, the, 128, 129, 138, 140  
     144  
*Geddes*, Sir Eric, 319  
*Glasgow*, H.M.S., 58-72  
*Gloucester*, H.M.S., 21  
*Gneisenau*, the, 57-73  
*Goeben*, the, 11, 19-21, 109, 110,  
     167  
*Gokonda*, the, 273  
*Golkath*, H.M.S., 168, 268  
*Good Hope*, H.M.S., 58-64  
*Goodenough*, Commodore W. R.,  
     26, 29, 234  
*Goshawk*, H.M.S., 26, 33  
*Grant*, Captain Noel, 46  
*Graudenz*, the, 77, 79  
*Gros*, the, 292  
*Grey*, Squadron-Commander D.  
     A. Spencer, 207  
*Gryfedale*, the, 189  
*Guepratte*, Rear-Admiral, 128  
*Gwendolen*, the, 198  
  
*Halcyon*, the, 77  
*Halsey*, Captain Lionel, 90  
*Hamilton*, Sir Ian, 108, 149, 166,  
     177  
*Hammersley*, Major-General, 177  
*Hampshire*, sinking of H.M.S.,  
     262  
*Hardy*, H.M.S., 82  
*Hawke*, H.M.S., 51  
*Hawkesley*, Commodore, 252  
*Heath*, Rear-Admiral, 224-249  
*Hedwig von Wissmann*, the, 199  
*Hela*, the, 42, 219  
*Hewlett*, Flight-Commander F.  
     E. F., 209  
*Highflyer*, H.M.S., 46  
*Hind*, H.M.S., 26  
  
*Hipper*, Rear-Admiral, 89-91,  
     225  
*Hogue*, H.M.S., 27, 42-44, 89  
*Holbrook*, Lieutenant, 110  
*Hollmann*, Admiral von, 6  
*Hood*, Rear-Admiral the Hon.  
     Horace, 55, 56, 224, 239  
*Horace*, the, 291  
*Hornet*, H.M.S., 27  
*Horton*, Lieut. Max, 42, 257, 275  
*Humber*, H.M.S., 55, 169  
*Hydra*, H.M.S., 27  
  
*Implacable*, H.M.S., 153, 157  
*Indefatigable*, H.M.S., 231, 256  
*Indomitable*, H.M.S., 90, 96, 247  
*Inflexible*, H.M.S., 64-9, 72, 114,  
     128, 140, 144  
*Ingenohl*, Admiral von, 12, 24,  
     25, 34, 39, 97  
*Ingleson*, Able Seaman, 311  
*Inverna*, the, 309  
*Invincible*, H.M.S., 27, 64-9, 72,  
     240, 256  
*Iron Duke*, H.M.S., 243, 249  
*Irresistible*, H.M.S., 129, 140,  
     142, 268  
*Itolo*, the, 192  
  
*Jackal*, H.M.S., 26  
*Jackson*, Sir Henry, 318  
*Jellicoe*, Admiral Sir John, 17,  
     18, 86, 186, 224, 305, 318,  
     319  
*Jerram*, Vice-Admiral Sir  
     Thomas, 243, 249  
  
*Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse*, the,  
     46  
*Kamio*, General, 117  
*Karlsruhe*, the, 57, 72  
*Kato*, Admiral, 117  
*Kavirondo*, the, 197  
*Kemmis*, Sub-Lieutenant, 253  
*Kemp*, Lieutenant, 253  
*Kernedy*, Captain Francis, 92  
*Kent*, H.M.S., 65-9, 70-2  
*Keyes*, Commodore Roger, 26-9,  
     33, 177  
*Khios*, the, 192  
*King Edward VII.*, H.M.S., 269

- Kitchener, Death of Lord, 262  
*Kingani*, the, 199  
*Kleber*, the, 169  
*Koenigin Luise*, the, 19  
*Koenigsberg*, the, 45, 189, 193-6, 199  
*Kolberg*, the, 77, 89  
*Köln*, the, 33-7  
*Kronprinz Wilhelm*, the, 72  
  
*Laertes*, H.M.S., 26  
*Laforey*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lance*, H.M.S., 19, 26, 51  
*Landrail*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lapwing*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lark*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lassoo*, H.M.S., 211  
*Laurel*, H.M.S., 26  
*Laverock*, H.M.S., 211  
*Lawford*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lawrence*, Commander F. N., 219, 275  
*Lawrence*, the, 201  
*Lawson* Captain, 239  
*Le Mesurier*, Commodore, 224, 249  
*Legion*, H.M.S., 26, 51  
*Leipzig*, the, 57, 67, 68, 70, 71  
*Levi*, Lieut.-Commander E. W., 33  
*Lennox*, H.M.S., 26  
*Leonidas*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lewis Pelly*, the, 201  
*Liberty*, H.M.S., 26  
*Limpus*, Admiral, 109  
*Linnet*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lion*, H.M.S., 27, 35-6, 90-6, 227-247  
*Livonius*, Admiral, 12  
*Lizard*, H.M.S., 26  
*Llewellyn*, H.M.S., 26  
*Logan*, Colonel, 187  
*London*, H.M.S., 151  
*Lord Nelson*, H.M.S., 134, 138, 140  
*Louis*, H.M.S., 26, 269  
*Lowestoft*, H.M.S., 26, 91  
*Laxley*, Captain, 88, 89  
*Loyal*, H.M.S., 27, 51  
*Lucifer*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lurcher*, H.M.S., 26-8, 32, 38  
*Lusitania*, the, 101, 272  
*Lutzow*, the, 237, 256  
  
*Luxembourg*, the, 291  
*Lydiard*, H.M.S., 26  
*Lynx*, H.M.S., 269  
*Lysander*, H.M.S., 26  
  
*Macedonia*, H.M.S., 65-8  
*Madden*, Rear-Admiral Charles, 17, 18  
*Mahon*, Major-General Sir Bryan, 177, 180  
*Mainz*, the, 33, 34, 35, 37  
*Majestic*, H.M.S., 132, 135, 140-5, 151, 168, 268  
*Malleson*, Midshipman W. St. A., 155-6  
*Manica*, H.M.S., 151  
*Maori*, H.M.S., 269  
*Marix*, Lieutenant, 207  
*Markomannia*, the, 190  
*Marlborough*, H.M.S., 4, 248, 261  
*Maroni*, the, 291  
*Maude*, General, 204  
*Meade*, Captain the Hon. Herbert, 93  
*Medusa*, H.M.S., 211  
*Melbourne*, H.M.S., 187, 188  
*Mersey*, H.M.S., 55, 195  
*Messoudieh*, the, 110  
*Meteor*, H.M.S., 93-6  
*Mimi*, H.M.S., 199  
*Miner*, the, 201  
*Minerva*, the, 169  
*Mine-sweepers*, 2, 41, 132-4, 144, 202  
*Mitchell*, Captain F. H., 177  
*Moewe*, the, 290-1  
*Moltke*, the, 77, 89, 92  
*Monitors*, 2, 55, 175, 195, 206, 276  
*Monmouth*, H.M.S., 5, 52-64  
*Monro*, Sir Charles, 183-4  
*Montague*, Lord, 274  
*Montecuccoli*, Admiral, 9  
*Moore*, Rear-Admiral, 27, 96  
*Moorson*, H.M.S., 33  
*Mont-Calm*, the, 187  
*Moresby*, H.M.S., 237, 252  
*Morris*, H.M.S., 233  
*Muller*, Captain Karl von, 191  
  
*Nachtigal*, the, 192  
*Napier*, Brigadier-General, 158

- Napier, Rear-Admiral, 242  
*Narborough*, H.M.S., 233  
 Nasmith, Lieut.-Commander M. E., 217  
*Natal*, H.M.S., 269  
*Neches*, the, in the Prize Court, 336-338  
*Nerissa*, H.M.S., 233  
*Nester*, H.M.S., 233, 256  
*New Zealand*, H.M.S., 27, 90, 96, 247  
*Nicator*, H.M.S., 233  
 Nicholson, Captain Wilmot, 91  
*Nicosian*, the, 278-9  
 Nixon, General, 203  
*Nomad*, H.M.S., 233, 256  
 Norton, Commander Max, 219  
*Nottingham*, H.M.S., 26, 34, 91, 306  
*Nubian*, H.M.S., 308  
 Nun, Captain, 202, 203  
*Nürnberg*, the, 57, 61, 67, 70  
  
*Obdurate*, H.M.S., 233  
*Ocean*, H.M.S., 134, 135, 140, 142, 200  
*Odin*, H.M.S., 200-1  
*Onslaught*, H.M.S., 253  
*Onslow*, H.M.S., 237, 242, 261  
*Otranto*, H.M.S., 58-9, 60-2  
  
 Pakenham, Rear-Admiral, 225  
 Palmer, Lieut.-Commander L. R., 242  
*Pathfinder*, H.M.S., 42  
*Patrol*, H.M.S., 82  
 Peek, Commander Ambrose M., 310  
*Pegasus*, H.M.S., 45, 189  
 Peirse, Admiral, 134  
 Peirse, Flight-Lieut. R., 209  
*Pelican*, H.M.S., 233  
 Pelly, Captain Henry, 90  
*Persia*, sinking of the, 274  
 Persius, Captain, 278  
*Petard*, H.M.S., 233, 252  
*Phaeton*, H.M.S., 169  
*Phoenix*, H.M.S., 26  
 Pillar, Captain William, 89  
*Pincher*, H.M.S., 169  
 Pohl, Admiral von, 97, 265  
*Pommern*, the, 255-6  
  
*Ponga*, the, 290  
*Posen*, the, 290  
*Prince Eitel Friedrich*, the, 72  
*Prince George*, H.M.S., 135, 140  
*Prince of Wales*, H.M.S., 151  
*Princess Royal*, H.M.S., 27, 90-6, 247  
*Prinz Adalbert*, 220  
*Providence*, the (trawler), 89  
 Prowse, Captain, 232  
  
*Queen Elizabeth*, H.M.S., 128-40, 158, 162-4, 169  
*Queen*, H.M.S., 151, 268  
*Queen Mary*, H.M.S., 27, 35, 232, 256  
*Queen*, the (transport), 308  
  
*Renard*, H.M.S., 169  
*Rinaldo*, H.M.S., 56  
*River Clyde*, the (collier), 154-8  
 Robeck, Vice-Admiral John Michael de, 108, 140, 177  
 Robinson, Commander Eric, 144  
 Ross, Captain George P., 248  
*Rostock*, the, 256  
 Rowles, Able Seaman William G., 312  
  
 Samson, Commander C. R., 206, 208  
 Samson, Seaman George Mackenzie, 155-6  
*Sandfly*, H.M.S., 26  
*Santa Isabel*, the, 68  
*Sapphire*, H.M.S., 153  
 Savill, Captain Herbert, 262  
*Saxon Prince*, the, 291  
*Scharnhorst*, the, 57-70  
 Scheer, Admiral von, 225, 294-6  
 Schultz, Captain, 309  
*Scorpion*, H.M.S., 169  
*Severn*, H.M.S., 55, 195  
*Seydlitz*, the, 77, 79, 89, 92-6  
*Shaitan*, the, 210, 203  
*Sharl*, H.M.S., 256  
 Sims, Rear-Admiral, 305  
 Sippe, Lieutenant S. V., 208  
*Sudar*, the, 200  
 Smith, Lieut.-Colonel Carrington, 158

- Smuts, General, 193-4.  
 Soden, the, 192  
 Southampton, H.M.S., 26, 91, 234, 252, 261  
 Sowerby, Captain, 231  
 Spee, Admiral von, 45, 57-74, 252  
 Speedy, H.M.S., 41  
 Spreewald, the, 46  
 Stewart, Captain Bertrand, 15  
 Stirling, Captain Anselan J. B., 252  
 Stoker, Lieut.-Commander H. H. G. D., 217  
 Stopford, Lieut.-General Sir F. W., 177, 180, 182  
 Stralsund, the, 26  
 Strassburg, the, 28-33, 37, 77  
 Sturdee, Vice-Admiral Sir Frederick Doveton, 64, 66, 68, 69, 71, 243  
 Submarines, British: A E 2, 217, 269; D 2, 26; D 5, 269; D 8, 26; E 1, 219; E 3, 269; E 4, 26, 33; E 5, 26; E 6, 26, 28, 33; E 7, 26, 30, 269; E 8, 26, 28, 30; E 9, 26, 42, 219; E 11, 217; E 12, 218; E 13, 269, 280; E 14, 216, 217, 218; E 15, 144, 269; E 20, 269; E 23, 220  
 Submarines, German: U 9, 43; U 17, 276  
 Suffren, the, 128, 131, 135, 138, 140  
 Surprise, H.M.S., 192  
 Suilej, H.M.S., 27  
 Swift, H.M.S., 309-12  
 Swiftsure, H.M.S., 140, 153  
 Sydney, H.M.S., 190  
 Tailor, H.M.S., 169  
 Termagant, H.M.S., 233  
 Theseus, H.M.S., 179  
 Tiger, H.M.S., 90-6  
 Tigress, H.M.S., 27  
 Tipperary, H.M.S., 257, 256, 261  
 Tirpitz, Admiral von, 265-6  
 Tovey, Lieut.-Commander J. C., 242  
 Townshend, General, 202, 203  
 Trader, the, 291  
 Triumph, H.M.S. 128, 132, 140, 144, 151, 168, 268  
 Turbulent, H.M.S., 233, 252, 256  
 Turner, Commander R. R., 220  
 Tyrwhitt, Commodore R. A., 26, 28, 29, 33, 34, 91, 211  
 Undaunted, H.M.S., 51, 91, 209  
 Undine, the, 220  
 Unwin, Commander E., 155, 156  
 Venerable, H.M.S., 56  
 Vengeance, H.M.S., 128, 131, 132, 135, 140  
 Victoria, H.M.S., 18  
 Viney, Flight Lieutenant, 277  
 Von der Tann, the, 277, 75; 32, 85, 89  
 Von Wissmann, the, 198  
 Warrior, H.M.S., 241, 242, 243, 256  
 Warspite, H.M.S., 243  
 Weddigen, Captain-Lieut. Otto, 103  
 Welford, Captain, 162  
 Wemyss, Rear-Admiral R. E., 153  
 Wenninger, Lieutenant, 276  
 Wesburn, the, 291  
 Westfalen, the, 220  
 Westmacott, Lieutenant Eric, 37  
 Wharton, Commander Eric, 73  
 Wiesbaden, the, 255  
 Wilhelmina, the, 90  
 Williams, Able Seaman W. C., 155, 556  
 Winifred, the, 197  
 Wintour, Captain, 253  
 Wolverine, H.M.S., 169  
 Wurtemberg, the Duke of, 46  
 Wylie, Colonel Daughy, 162  
 Yarmouth, H.M.S., 242  
 Yorck, the, 30, 33, 37, 77, 78, 275







